

SCAC to Host Counties Connect: A Legislative Action Day on Feb. 22

Make plans to join your colleagues from across the state for SCAC's **Counties Connect: A Legislative Action Day** on Wednesday, February 22, 2023, at the USC Alumni Center in downtown Columbia.

Formerly known as the association's Mid-Year Conference, this event provides an excellent opportunity for county leaders to connect with their local delegation members to advocate for issues important to their counties. All county officials are encouraged to participate. The program will kick off at 10 a.m. with a legislative briefing followed by a group visit to the State House while the House and Senate are in session. County leaders will have opportunities to speak with delegation members while at the State House. Lunch will be provided at the USC Alumni Center, and the conference program will continue in the afternoon with timely topics. County officials will have additional opportunities to engage with their legislators during the legislative reception that evening at The Palmetto Club from 5 – 7 p.m. More detailed information including the conference program agenda is available at SCCounties.org.

The following Institute of Government classes will be offered on Thursday, February 23.



COUNTIES CONNECT: A LEGISLATIVE ACTION DAY

Level I Electives:

Employment Law: What Counties Need to Know
Building an Effective County Team

Level II:

The Policy Role of Council
Effective Communications

The Council Chairperson's Workshop will also be offered on February 23. This session is open to county council chairs and vice chairs and is free of charge.

Don't miss this opportunity to network, engage, advocate, and learn! Visit SCCounties.org to learn more and register.

SCAC Hosts 2022 Legislative Conference, Adopts Policy Positions

The SCAC Legislative Committee adopted policy positions for the 2023 Session of the S.C. General Assembly on December 2 at the association's 2022 Legislative Conference, held December 1 & 2 in Greenville.

SCAC President Debra B. Summers (Lexington County Council Member) presided over the two-day conference, which included presentations by the Environmental Affairs Office of the S.C. Department of Health & Environmental Control

(DHEC); S.C. Public Health Services Department, DHEC; and the S.C. Law Enforcement Division's Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity Program (SC CIC).



Debra B. Summers
SCAC President

A panel discussion was on Friday (December 2), the second day of the conference.

Roy Costner III (Pickens County Council Vice Chairman), presided as Legislative Committee Chair over the following SCAC Policy Steering Committee reports:

- **County Government and Intergovernmental Relations**—Chaired by Joseph B. Dill, Greenville County Council
- **Land Use, Natural Resources and Transportation**—Chaired by Charles T. Edens, Sumter County Council

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- **Public Safety, Corrections and Judicial**—Chaired by Julie J. Armstrong, Charleston County Clerk of Court
 - **Revenue, Finance and Economic Development**—Chaired by Belinda D. Copeland, Darlington County.
- A legislative panel discussion preceded the presentation of SCAC Policy Steering Committee reports. Participating in the panel

discussion were Senators Karl B. Allen and Ross Turner (Greenville County).

Friday, December 2

Myra Reece, Director of Environmental Affairs (EA), DHEC, explained the roles of EA's Bureau of Air Quality, Bureau of Land &



SCAC's 2022 Legislative Conference, AC Hotel, Greenville, Dec. 2.



Myra Reece
Director of Environmental Affairs
DHEC

Waste Management, Bureau of Water, Office of Ocean & Coastal Resource Management, and Bureau of Environmental Health Services.

She also explained EA's mission in environmental protection at the federal, state and local levels, and how EA is "flipping the narrative" to "local, state and federal" verses "federal, state and local" by enhancing partnerships. EA is striving to enhance its partnerships by implementing intentional strategies to improve communication, and communicate with partners more frequently. During 2023, EA will be holding local government summits, a key Onsite Wastewater Storage briefing with SCAC in April, and continuing to engage with stakeholders on electronic waste following the adoption of Act 234.

Priorities of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are community environmental justice/civil rights, climate change, and funding. Priorities of EA are to provide sustainable funding to maintain EPA program delegation, build stronger partnerships with local governments, and to continue engaging at the national level.

For more information, contact Myra Reece at (803) 667-1113 or reecemc@dhec.sc.gov.

Kandi Fredere, Ph.D., Upstate Region Public Health Director, DHEC, identified the state's public health regions—Upstate, Midlands, Pee Dee, and Lowcountry. She then provided an overview of the broad range of programs and services provided by local health departments.

DHEC manages and
(See *Legislative Conference*, P. 4)



Kandi Fredere, Ph.D.
Upstate Region Public Health Director
DHEC



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Council Member*

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Presentation of Legislative Policy Steering Committee Reports

Presenting Legislative Policy Steering Committee Reports on December 1 at SCAC's 2022 Legislative Conference were (left to right): Belinda D. Copeland (chair), Revenue, Finance and Economic Development; Julie J. Armstrong (chair), Public Safety, Corrections and Judicial; Charles T. Edens (chair), Land Use, Natural Resources and Transportation; Joseph B. Dill (chair), County Government and Intergovernmental Relations. Shown next are Roy Costner III, Legislative Committee Chair, who presided over the reports, and SCAC President Debra B. Summers.



SCAC Presents 2022 J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award and Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award to Beaufort County



SCAC's executive director attended Beaufort County Council's meeting on November 14, 2022, to present the association's 2022 J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award (JMG) and Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award (BL) to Beaufort County. Shown above accepting the 2022 BL Award are: (left to right) Beaufort County Council Member Alice Howard, SCAC Executive Director Tim Winslow, Council Member (former) Chris Hervochon, Council Member York Glover (back), Stormwater Manager Katie Herrera (front), Council Member Mark Lawson, Chairman Joseph Passiment, and Council Members Logan Cunningham, Larry McElynn and Stu Rodman. Winslow is shown at right presenting the 2022 JMG Award to Chairman Passiment.



County Officials Speak and Ask Questions at Legislative Conference

County officials always have the opportunity to speak and ask questions following presentations, including legislative panel discussions. Shown here are some of the county officials who spoke and asked questions at the Legislative Conference.



C. David Chinnis
Dorchester County
Council Member



Jason L. Ward
Dorchester County
Administrator



Robert Winkler
York County
Council Vice Chairman



Gary M. Mixon
Sumter County
Administrator



Alphonso Bradley
Florence County
Council Member

Legislative Conference ... (Continued from P. 2)

staffs at least one health department in each county. Most services are provided at little or no cost to the client. Services are billed to Medicaid or other health insurance providers.

Local health departments do not provide traditional "sick care," as most services are preventive in nature or related to infectious disease control.

They provide a broad range of programs and services, including: nutrition services; maternal and child health care; preventive health; tuberculosis testing, diagnosis, treatment and management; childhood vaccines, and adult vaccines; infectious and chronic disease surveillance, investigation, treatment, education and prevention; and routine surveillance for more than 75 diseases.

Health educators perform assessments, based on local input, to produce Community Health Assessments, and Community Health Improvement Plans. They also help promote policy and systems change efforts to prevent substance abuse, and to promote nutrition, physical activity, and much more.

To make an appointment at any health department in the state, call 1-855-472-3432 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., or use "web chat" on DHEC's website at www.scdhec.gov.

Caitlin Scroggins, Program Coordinator for South Carolina Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity (SC CIC) at the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED), talked about growing threats to cybersecurity, recent cyber incidents affecting local government entities across the United States, and the South Carolina Critical



Caitlin Scroggins
Program Coordinator for S.C. Critical
Infrastructure Cybersecurity
S.C. Law Enforcement Division

Infrastructure Cybersecurity Program.

SLED oversees the SC CIC Program, responsible for improving the cyber posture of South Carolina. The SC CIC Team is redefining how cybersecurity services can be provided, intelligence distributed, and incident response performed at the state level. The team provides essential security services to South Carolina's critical infrastructure sectors, maintains the Cyber Liaison Officer (CLO) Program, and leads the SC CIC Taskforce, comprised of Federal and state partners. The CLO Program has approximately 359 participants, including around 125 participating organizations within the government facilities sector. SC CIC has nearly 240 organizations who participate in the program.

During the presentation, Scroggins explained how cybersecurity is protection against digital attacks. She shared research that stressed the magnitude of cybercrime.

Dark Reading, a cybersecurity news site that reports on threat intelligence and cyber breaches, recently reported that the combined annual revenue of Tesla, Facebook, Microsoft, Apple, Amazon, and Walmart totals \$1.28 trillion, but cybercrime earns at least \$1.5 trillion annually. Dark Reading also found that the \$1.5 trillion cybercriminals earn is equal to Russia's gross domestic product (GDP).

According to *Cybercrime Magazine*, 'By 2025, it's estimated that

cybercrime will cost the world \$10.5 trillion annually.”

The FBI Internet Crimes Complaint Center (ic3.gov) reported 2.75 million complaints due to cybercrime between 2017 and 2021 that caused \$18.7 billion in losses.

To combat cybercrime and improve your county's security posture, Scroggins encouraged county officials to:

- Notify local law enforcement to report cybercrime.
- Report cybercrime to FBI's IC3 via its website at ic3.gov.
- Consider notifying SC Association of Counties of cyber incidents
- Ensure that counties receive continuous cybersecurity/phishing training.
- Insist on multi-factor authentication for external access (email, OneDrive, VPN) to business apps for important, personal apps such as email and banking.
- Continuously update your computer software and systems.

For more information about SC CIC, Scroggins encouraged county officials to contact the SC CIC team at: cyber@sled.sc.gov

Visit SCAC's website to view, download and print all of

(See *Legislative Conference*, P 6)

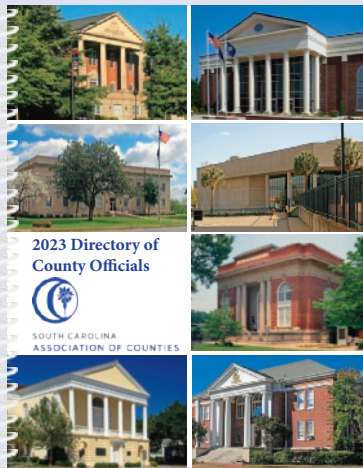
SCAC's 2023 Directory of County Officials

SCAC's 2023 *Directory of County Officials* will be published and distributed in February. So, order a copy if you want to know "Who's Who" in South Carolina county government.

The *Directory* identifies all elected and appointed county officials in the state. This popular, award-winning publication also identifies SCAC's Officers,

Board of Directors and Corporate Partners; Regional Councils of Government; federal and state officials; and State Senators and Representatives. Addresses and telephone numbers are included for all county officials, state officials and members of the S.C. General Assembly.

Cost: \$25.00 per copy (including tax, postage, shipping and handling).



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NEWS BRIEFS

Orientation for Newly Elected Officials

Congratulations and welcome to newly elected council members from counties across the state! SCAC's Orientation for Newly-Elected Officials was held on December 8, 2022. For those unable to attend, an on-demand version may be viewed on SCAC's learning portal. For more information, contact Susan Turkopuls at sturkopuls@scac.sc or call 803-252-7255.

Now Available – 2022 South Carolina Property Tax Rates by County

The recently published *Property Tax Rates by County* report contains millage rates for each county, city, school district and special tax district in the state, as well as information on fees, abatements, mil values, and local option sales tax credit factors. This report would not be possible without the support of county auditors, and we would like to thank each of the state's 46 auditor's offices for their contributions. The report may be accessed on-line at SCCounties.org/research-information/property-tax-rates.

Applications Due Soon for the 2023 SCAC Scholarship Program

Each year, SCAC's Presidential Scholarship Program awards one \$2,500 scholarship to a graduating high school senior who is a resident of the same county as our SCAC President. Since Lexington County Council Member Debra B. Summers is the current SCAC President, our 2023 Presidential Scholarship will be awarded to a Lexington County resident. For 2023, SCAC's Board of Directors Scholarship Program will also award \$2,500 scholarships to four graduating high school seniors who are residents of counties chosen by lot by the association. Berkeley, Calhoun, Dillon, and Lancaster counties were selected in the 2023 draw, and a Board of Directors Scholarship will be awarded to a resident of each county. Applications are due February 1. For more information, including how to apply online, visit the SCAC scholarship webpage at SCCounties.org/scac-scholarship-programs.

Wondering What's Happening at the Statehouse? Stay Informed with SCAC's Friday Reports

Stay in the know by reading *Friday Report* emails from SCAC's lobbying staff. The *Friday Report* includes legislative updates on issues important to county government and notifies county officials of calls-to-action to support legislation for strong, effective county government. To request the *Friday Report*, please email scac@scac.sc. *Friday Reports* may also be viewed online at SCCounties.org.

SCAC Awards Competition – Call for Entries

The Association is currently accepting applications for the 2023 J. Mitchell Graham/Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Awards Competition. The J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award recognizes counties that address community challenges, implement opera-

(See **NEWS BRIEFS**, next page)

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tional improvements, or enhance their citizens' quality of life in a unique way. The Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award highlights the growing need for regional partnerships, strategies, and solutions. Competition for this award is open to two or more political subdivisions (counties, cities, districts, or councils of government) that worked together on a project. All applications are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 21. The awards competition will be held at SC ETV in Columbia on May 24, 2023. For more information, please see the 2023 Awards Brochure and the Awards Toolkit at SCCounties.org/awards.

Legislative Conference ... (Continued from P. 5)

the presentations: <https://www.sccounties.org/news/presentations-scac-legislative-conference-available>.

SCAC developed policy positions this past fall, based upon input received from the four policy steering committees, the County Council Coalition, various association groups and other county officials. SCAC's Legislative Committee officially adopted the 2023 Policy Positions on December 2.

SCAC's Legislative Committee has 75 members, including 29 members of the association's Board of Directors and council chairpersons (or their delegates) representing South Carolina's 46 counties. Steering committees met previously at the SCAC office in September and November.

Fairfield County Receives RERC Grant, Holds Two Workshops to Develop Strategies & Action Plan

Fairfield County was one of 25 small and rural communities in the United States, and the only county in South Carolina last year to receive a Recreation Economy for Rural Communities (RERC) planning grant last year.

The RERC program is a planning assistance program that helps rural communities leverage outdoor recreation to revitalize their Main Streets. The program is a joint effort between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), and the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC).

A federal planning team worked with the Fairfield County steering committee and other community stakeholders over the course of four months. The focal point was a two-day facilitated community workshop, held on December 5 and 6, 2022. Participants worked together to develop strategies and an action plan to grow the county's local outdoor recreation economy.

Fairfield County was awarded the grant following a comprehensive review process from a pool of more than 100 applicants. Through the RERC grant, the county and its partners hope to connect its communities with existing state parks and lakes along with the statewide Palmetto Trail, help residents know about and access these outdoor amenities, draw visitors to the county, and support tourism in the various downtown communities.

To learn more about the RERC Program, visit www.epa.gov.

SC RIA to Hold Two Webinars on Feb. 7 & 14 to Address Specific Infrastructure Projects

The S.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority (SC RIA) recently announced that two webinars will be held in February to address specific types of infrastructure projects.



The first webinar, Lead Service Line Replacement, will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023. Currently, \$73.4 million in funding for drinking water is available.

The second webinar, Emerging Contaminants, will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2023. Currently, \$13.6 million for drinking water and \$3.2 million for clean water is available.

Participants may register for one or both webinars at www.ria.sc.gov.

SOCIAL MEDIA



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Follow SCAC on social media to learn what's happening at the State House and how SCAC's programs and services can benefit your county. Share what's happening in your county. Let's promote the many ways our counties are making a positive difference for our citizens across the state.

Almost 200 Attend SCAC's 2022 Local Government Attorneys' Institute

John O. Wienges Jr.
SCAC Staff Attorney

The Local Government Attorneys' Institute proved, yet again, to be a very successful virtual event this year with almost 200 attendees. Based on the evaluations completed by attendees, the program was once again well-received.

This year, the program offered CLE credits for lawyers for several specific practical areas. The programming began with a presentation on ethics that was thoughtfully led by Nichole Davis, who serves as the Risk Management Director for the South Carolina Bar. The update focused on ethical best practices including client representation and managing situations where conflicts of interest often arise. Joan E. Winters, an attorney with the Winters Law Firm, followed with an informative discussion on service animals and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

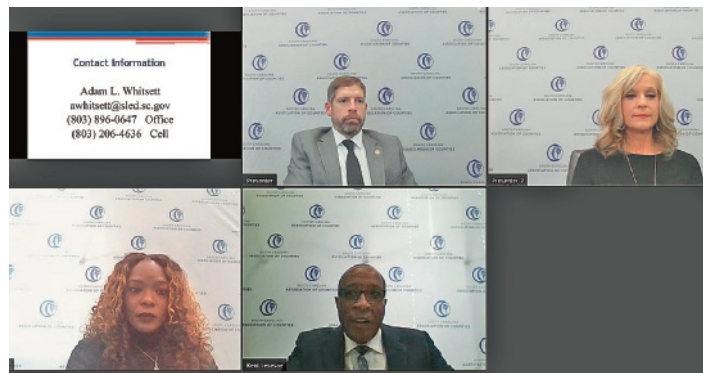
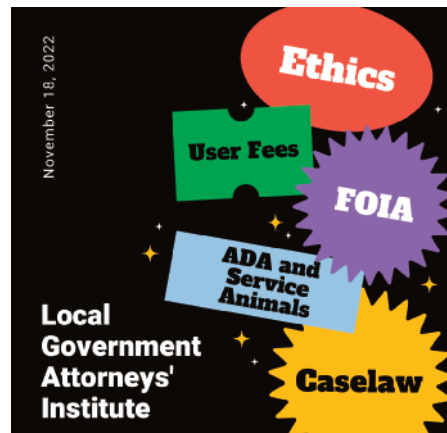
The next segment of the program focused on "user fees" and was led by Arrigo Carotti, who serves as the county attorney for Horry County. This discussion outlined the history and origination of user fees and provided detailed insights on the complex legisla-

tive process regarding the passage of the user fee bill that was signed into law earlier this year.

Attendees received an additional hour of ethics credits with a riveting and informative presentation from Professor Lisa Butler-Smith, entitled "Lions, Tigers, and Bears — Oh My!," which focused on current state and federal case law involving professional responsibility and legal ethics. Next, Adam Whitsett, general counsel for the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED), and Ginny L. Merck-Dupont, an attorney with the Talley Law Firm, P.A., led a great discussion on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) that offered practical guidance relating to FOIA requests and confidentiality scenarios regarding the release of sensitive information.

The final presentation of the day was conducted by Amanda Karras, executive director and general counsel for the International Municipal Lawyers Association (IMLA). Attendees received an insightful update on 2022 federal case law that impacts local governments.

This program is a service offered by SCAC to provide local government practitioners with relevant legal education at an economical price. The Local Government Attorneys' Institute has grown into the largest public sector legal seminar in South Carolina. The program's continued success was evident by comments made during the breaks and an outstanding turnout. Now is the time to go ahead and save the date for next year's Local Government Attorneys' Institute on November 17, 2023.



SCAC Hosts Orientation for Newly Elected Council Members

On Dec. 8, 2022, SCAC welcomed more than 60 newly elected county council members from across the state to the Orientation for Newly Elected Council Members—a program designed to help prepare these leaders for their new duties and responsibilities.

Among the topics discussed were roles and responsibilities of county council; forms and powers of county government; rules of procedure; county risk management; the Freedom of Information Act; budget basics and funding sources; economic

development; and the State Ethics, Government Accountability and Campaign Reform Act. Speakers included: Rynne Caldwell, Chief Investigator, S.C. State Ethics Commission; Peggy McLean, Director of Integrated Rural Strategies, SC Department of Commerce;

(Continued on next page)



SCAC President Debra B. Summers (inset-left) welcomes the Orientation for Newly Elected Council Members, held on Dec. 8, 2022, at the DoubleTree, Columbia.



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SCAC's 2023 Conference Calendar

2023

Jan. 24 & 25

S.C. Insurance Trusts Membership Meeting,
Omni, Hilton Head Island

Feb. 22

Counties Connect: A Legislative Action Day

Feb. 23

Institute of Government, USC Alumni Center,
Columbia

July 31 & Aug. 1

Institute of Government

Aug. 1-3

Annual Conference, Wild Dunes, Isle of
Palms

TBD

Setoff Debt/GEAR

Oct. 17

Institute of Government

Oct. 18

County Council Coalition, Embassy Suites,
Columbia

Nov. 17 (Location TBD)

S.C. Local Government Attorneys' Institute

Nov. 30-Dec. 1

Legislative Conference, AC Hotel, Greenville

NACo's 2023 Conference Calendar



Feb. 11 - 14

Legislative Conference, Washington Hilton,
Washington, D.C.

July 21 - 24

Austin, TX

Daniel Prentice, Deputy County Administrator/Chief Financial Officer, Dorchester County; and SCAC staff.

SCAC hosts the Orientation for Newly Elected Council Members every other year following a general election. By attending the daylong program, new council members are enrolled in the Institute of Government for County Officials and earn six hours of credit toward their Level I certificate. The association looks forward to working with the newly elected council members.

Did You Know?

S.C. State Ethics Commission:

Did you know that you are limited in how you expend campaign funds after your election?

Pursuant to Section 8-13-1370 of the Ethics Reform Act a candidate may disperse funds remaining in their campaign account in the following ways: (1) to defray ordinary and necessary expenses incurred in connection with his duties in his public office; (2) to be contributed to an organization exempt from tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, a political party, or a committee; (3) to be maintained in the campaign account for a subsequent race for the same elective office; (4) to further the candidacy of the individual for a different elective office. However, after December 31, 1992, the funds must be used in a campaign for a different elective office only as provided for in Section 8-13-1352; (5) to be returned pro rata to all contributors; (6) to be contributed to the state's general fund; or (7) to be distributed using a combination of these options. Please note that under no circumstances can you spend campaign money on personal expenses.



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