

**GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNICATIONS AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

September 26, 2023  
4:03 p.m.  
301 University Ridge, Greenville  
Council Committee Room

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place and agenda was posted online and on the bulletin board at County Square and made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

***Committee Members Present:***

Chris Harrison, *Chairman*  
Benton Blount, *Vice-Chairman*  
Joey Russo  
Steve Shaw  
Butch Kirven

***Committee Members Absent:***

None

***Others Present:***

Alan Mitchell, *Council District 23*  
Liz Seman, *Council District 24*  
Joe Kernell, *County Administrator*  
Bob Mihalic, *Governmental Affairs Officer*  
Regina McCaskill, *Clerk to Council*  
Jessica Stone, *Deputy Clerk to Council*  
Terrance Galloway, *Information Systems*

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|------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b><i>Item (1)</i></b> | <b><u><i>Call to Order</i></u></b>   | Chairman Harrison |
| <b><i>Item (2)</i></b> | <b><u><i>Invocation</i></u></b>  | Councilor Russo   |
| <b><i>Item (3)</i></b> | <b><u><i>Introduction of the Greenville County Citizen's Academy</i></u></b> |                   |

Presented by: Nicole Wood, Assistant County Administrator

Nicole Wood presented a draft of the proposed Greenville County Citizens Academy. The following key points were highlighted:

- The program would run from January through November
- No meeting in July and graduation in November
- Two citizens from each Council District
- Goal of the program:
  - More engaged citizens with a better understanding of Greenville County operations
  - Be a resource for others
  - Greater sense of community
- Each month would highlight certain departments and locations
- Council to approve the program by resolution
- Nominations / applications due mid-November
- Candidate acceptance by December 15, 2023
- Program to begin January 9, 2024
- Time commitment for participants was 1 day per month, 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

***Item (4)***      **Discussion**

Chairman Harrison stated he felt it was important to include some of the most influential, negative and/or positive, citizens from each district. It may be good from some of those residents who did not necessarily agree with County Council to see how the County operated. Mr. Harrison stated it was also important to nominate those individuals who were able to commit to the program. He liked the idea of the participants either working on a service project or presenting a report to Council at the end of program. Mr. Harrison suggested his colleagues review the outline, make suggestions or any needed revisions, and be prepared to vote on the issue at the next meeting.

Councilor Blount stated, given the diversity in his district, he would like to see two people from each district that did not know each other. Mr. Blount also suggested a mapping of each district, showing other governmental entities, landfills, and other special features of the district.

Councilor Russo stated he liked Mr. Blount's suggestion regarding mapping of each district. It would help each of the participants become a better resource for others in their district. Mr. Russo stated some type of feedback mechanism would be beneficial; he suggested participants complete surveys after each session.

Councilor Kirven stated both the Historic and Natural Resources Trust and the Sheriff's Citizen Advisory Board were made up of individuals nominated by Council Members; both of those boards worked well. Mr. Kirven asked about administrative support for the program.

Councilor Blount suggested the participants could participate in a podcast at the end of the program and discuss their experiences in participating in the program. He asked if there would be any criteria to possibly exclude potential participants, such as previous employees.

Councilor Russo stated there should be no reason to exclude all previous employees from participating in the program. The outline was awesome and he was very excited about the program.

Councilor Blount stated he was also very excited about the proposed; some aspects of the program would be very eye-opening, such as budget discussions.

***Item (5)***      **Adjournment**

**Action:** Councilor Russo moved to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously the meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Jessica M. Stone  
Deputy Clerk to Council