The Livability Committee of Spartanburg County Council met on Monday, August 21, 2017, in County Council Chambers of the County Administrative Office Building. In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, notice of this meeting was provided in advance to the local news media and other interested parties. The following were in attendance: Honorable Justin Bradley, Chairman; and Honorables Jeff Horton and David Britt, Committee Members; along with Honorables Michael Brown, Whitney Farr, Bob Walker, and Roger Nutt, Council Members. Also attending were Katherine O'Neill, County Administrator; Jim Hipp, Deputy County Administrator; John Harris, County Attorney; and Ginny Dupont, County Attorney.

I. Chairman Bradley called the meeting to order.

II. A. Ms. Laura Ringo, Executive Director, presented information in reference to a request from Partners for Active Living that Council designate up to $150,000 from existing trails funding for a pedestrian bridge over the Lawson's Fork Creek between the Drayton Mills Trails and the Beaumont Mill community. The bridge will be located on top of a sewer line that Spartanburg Water will be replacing soon and will serve to connect parts of the Drayton Trail. (Video and Slides are included in backup) Ms. Ringo acknowledged and thanked members of their Trails Advisory Committee, Partners for Active Living's Board of Directors and Colleagues present at the meeting. Over the last decade, there have been a number of trails that have come online in the urban area. A few of those include the Wadsworth Trail on the left side near Interstate 26, trails at Glendale, the Woodruff Greenway, the Mary Black Foundation Rail Trail downtown as well as others. Despite these additions and these beautiful facilities, those in the Active Living and Recreation World often hear that Spartanburg does not have many trails. Many existing trails are not tied together, so it feels disconnected and a little sporadic. In 2013 and 2014, Partners for Active Living, Spartanburg County Parks, and fifteen different Community Partners came together to go through a trails planning process to address the disconnection. The focus was on the urban
area of Spartanburg, because they wanted to start with what is manageable and focused. They hope to one day be talking about a network that connects our entire County and every community in it. The planning process suggested more than 120 miles of new trail and was narrowed down to a conceptual 32 mile network. A map is included in backup. There are 11 miles of existing trails and 21 miles of proposed new trails. In addition, the Committee came up with a structure when they went through the planning process. It has Partners for Active Living playing a coordinating role between two groups. The first is among their many partners who are doing trails building, trails owning, and trails maintaining. This includes the Tyger River Foundation, the Westside Neighborhood Association, and Spartanburg Area Conservancy. This group is working through coordinated signage, rules, and emergency response communication. There is another group that John Montgomery leads that is thinking about strategy, working with private property owners, and raising private funds. This request was for funding a connection between the new Drayton Mills trail and the Beaumont Mill community. Mr. John Montgomery presented information on project specifics. As part of the Drayton Mills redevelopment effort, they have built two and a half miles of walking trail, because they know that trails are one of the most desired recreational amenities and especially support economic development. This request will connect Drayton Mills' residents and visitors to Beaumont and then on into downtown. Spartanburg Water of which Mr. Montgomery serves as a Commissioner will be replacing a sewer line over Lawson's Fork Creek that is located adjacent to the existing trail that they have already constructed. They were fortunate enough to learn about this project early on and were able to work with Spartanburg Water through their design process to beef up the engineering for this crossing to be able to support additional weight associated with a bridge. Spartanburg Water is willing to include a pedestrian bridge on top of their aerial sewer line crossing over the Lawson's Fork Creek. They are requesting for the County to own and maintain this bridge on top of the sewer line as well as fund it. This partnership will make the connection significantly easier by eliminating months of permitting and costs. They will not have to seek an additional permit. The benefits of this connection are many. This will connect two revitalized mills, Drayton and Beaumont, and expand our trail network. They will be working with Spartanburg Parks on the design. The request is for up to $150,000 to build the bridge, the ramps up to the bridge, and then a very short piece of trail on the other side of the creek from the shore up to Adam's Park. The City is making improvements to Adam's Park, and Spartanburg Regional, which is housed in Beaumont Mill, is working to improve the connection from the Mill up to Adam's Park. Mr. Bradley thanked John and Laura for the work they have done on this and stated that Council
has already allocated funds for trails through our Budgeting process. Mr. Britt stated the “New Spartanburg” started five or ten years ago. We started having great success. Our number one need is qualified people looking at Spartanburg and wanting to live, work and play in Spartanburg. Trails mean a lot to people looking at coming to Spartanburg. Mr. Britt stated that he is totally in support of this. Mr. Montgomery showed a video to the group. (Video is enclosed in backup.) Mr. Montgomery stated the money is for building and maintaining the bridge. Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District, who owns the line, will be engineering the sewer line, but they do not own and maintain anything other than sewer lines. Their request is for a governmental agency to agree to own and maintain the structure that sits on top of the sewer line. The bridge is over 100 feet. It is a steel structure. The plan is to use very durable materials that will not require ongoing maintenance on a regular basis. Mr. Montgomery stated that they have Agreements already in place with both the County and the City to help with long-term maintenance and design of the trail. Mr. Walker stated this $150,000 is coming from a Hospitality Budget item for trails, and consequently we are restricted as to how we can use the funds. Motion made by Mr. Horton to support request through the appropriation of funds from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure “trails bank.” Motion seconded by Mr. Britt and carried.

B. Information received regarding activities of the Parks Department.

Meeting adjourned.