

Sloan Asks Court to Prohibit Disbursement of “Council District Expense Funds”

Council Considered New Rules at March 2 Meeting

Hits: 3524

Edward D. Sloan, Jr., and the South Carolina Public Interest Foundation petitioned the Court of Common Pleas in Greenville Friday, February 26, to prohibit Greenville County from “disbursement of funds from the Council District Expense Fund.”

The complaint for declaratory judgment and injunctive relief was filed just two working days prior to the Council’s scheduled meeting to receive advice from legal council regarding rule changes necessary to comply with the Feb. 8 ruling by Judge John C. Few that the “Council District Expense Fund portion of the 2006-2007 budget for Greenville County is declared to be an impermissible delegation of legislative authority, and thus to be illegal.”

The funds covered by the Feb. 8 Court ruling having already been disbursed the court order had no practical effect other than as a precedent.

A spokesman for the County said no funds have been disbursed from the Council District Expense Fund since the Feb. 8 ruling.

The purpose of the Feb. 26 request by Sloan was to ensure that no funds are spent from the account without a vote on individual District expenditures of funds by the full Council.

The Council District Expense Fund provided an equal amount of funds to be available for each of the 12 Council Districts to pay for “general business supplies, special documents, incentives and awards, periodicals, professional journals, and reference books; per diem and mileage, community functions, conferences, and training seminars; costs associated with special, nonrecurring community requests for infrastructure purposes such as flooding, roads, lights, sewer and drainage; public buildings and grounds; infrastructure related studies, and contributions to local governments.

Each Council member could spend all, a portion, or none of the funds allocated to his or her District. Records of expenditures were available for public review under the provisions of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.