Oconee waits for fired administrator to sign deal

County Attorney Tom Martin does not expect any surprises with Surrett settlement

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WALHALLA — Oconee County officials are still waiting for fired Administrator Dale Surrett to sign a contract settlement approved by County Council this week.

County Attorney Tom Martin said Friday that Surrett contacted Council Clerk Beth Hulse about executing the settlement agreement, but has not yet signed it.

"I don't anticipate any surprises with getting (the settlement agreement) completely executed," Martin said.

Martin said he was not sure if a time had been set for the signing or when exactly it would take place, adding: "No other surprises of any kind have been brought to my attention since the council meeting."

By a 4-0 vote, council approved a settlement agreement Tuesday night that gives Surrett an additional $53,000 on top of his regular $106,000 salary plus benefits for one year.

Martin said Surrett's own attorney drafted the settlement agreement, which is why he is confident Surrett will sign.

Council Chairman Reg Dexter said he would lean on the other three councilmen — Wayne McCall, Mario Suarez and Joel Thrift — in helping to search for a new administrator, including drafting a job description for the position.

"We're going to get together as a group," Dexter said. "I'm not going to do this by myself."

Surrett's contract was terminated April 14. In a termination letter approved by Dexter, McCall and Thrift, they questioned, among other things, Surrett's leadership and his failure to deal with public complaints against the county's Building Codes Office.