Seneca library tops capital project list

BY NORMAN CANNADA
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WALHALLA — A new $7.7 million Seneca library topped the priority list developed by Oconee County Council Tuesday night for projects to be completed if voters approve a 1 percent capital sales tax referendum in November.

The council approved first reading of an ordinance that would allow voters to decide whether to approve spending nearly $36.5 million on 10 projects recommended by the Capital Sales Tax Commission last month.

The priority list was devel-

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SALES TAX REFERENDUM

PRIORITY LIST

1. Library System Enhancement: Seneca Branch	$7,700,000
2. Northern Economic Development	$1,150,000
3. Indoor Recreation/Aquatic Center	$11,000,000
4. Foothills Agriculture Resource Center	$6,705,000
5. Library System Enhancement: Westminster Branch	$1,300,000
6. Golden Corner Community Center/ Southern Library Branch	$4,374,280
7. Recreation/Senior Center	$736,200
8. Library System Enhancement: Salem Branch	$2,034,280
9. Library System Enhancement: Walhalla	$1,040,000
10. Oconee Heritage Multi-Site Renovations	$425,000

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oped in case the sales tax increase doesn't raise the required amount of money over the eight years the tax would be in effect if approved by the voters in the Nov. 4 general election. Council members used a combination of individual rankings by each council member to begin their discussions Tuesday.


McCall

But the deliberations were not without controversy.

During a discussion of how the councilmen had done their individual rankings, councilman Wayne McCall said he was told by clerk to council Beth Hulse to fill out the form differently than what was reflected by the councilmen's rankings.

"She comes to me and says, 'Rate the first one, second one and right on down,'" McCall said. "This, as far as what I've done, ain't worth nothing."

County administrator Scott Moulder told the council he wasn't involved in the discussion between McCall and Hulse and did not know what was said. Hulse was not at the meeting.


Thrift

Council chairman Joel Thrift tried to get council back to discussing a priority order for the projects, saying, 'Let's have a general discussion and see if there is any consensus that we can move forward on."

McCall's ranking only ranked his top three: the northern economic development project near Salem, the Oconee Heritage Center and the Foothills Agriculture Resource Center.

'This, as far as what I've done, ain't worth nothing.'

Wayne McCall
Oconee County councilman

As councilmen were discussing a tie vote between a new Seneca library branch and indoor recreation and aquatic center for the top priority, councilman Paul Corbeil suggested allowing McCall's numbers for the three he ranked to be changed to reflect the scoring system the other three councilmen had done.


Corbeil

Councilman Reg Dexter objected, pointing out that McCall had given zeroes to the other seven projects. He said McCall should assign numbers to each of the projects as the other council members had done.

After some discussion, McCall agreed to fill out another form. A 15-minute break was taken for McCall to fill out another form and give time for the scoring totals to be changed to reflect McCall's numbers. The council came back and ranked the list with little discussion.

The approved list, in priority order, is as follows: Seneca library, $7.7 million; northern economic development, $1.15 million; indoor recreation/aquatic center, $11 million; Foothills Agriculture Resource Center, $6.705 million; Westminster library, $1.3 million; Golden Corner Commerce Center/southern library branch, $4,374,280; recreation/senior center, $736,200; Salem library, $2,034,280; Walhalla library, $1.04 million; and Oconee Heritage Center, $425,000.

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