

INDEXJOURNAL.COM

INDEXJOURNAL

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 1919

VOL. 107, NO. 36

2 SECTIONS, 16 PAGES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2025

DAILY \$2

‘Make a ham sandwich’

Audit sent to office of SC Inspector General

By Renee Ortiz
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A forensic audit of the Town of Calhoun Falls released this month outlines mismanagement, questionable spending and lapses in financial oversight.

State Sen. Mike Gambrell and state Rep. Craig Gagnon confirmed with the

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INDEX-JOURNAL FILE

An audit of the Town of Calhoun Falls revealed information regarding questionable management of the town's finances.

Audit of Calhoun Falls uncovers extensive use of town's credit card, financial blackouts, mismanagement

By Renee Ortiz
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A forensic audit of the Town of Calhoun Falls has uncovered widespread financial mismanagement, budgetary failures, and questionable practices by Mayor Terrico Holland and other officials — a conclusion provided by a report issued this month by CRI Advisors, LLC on behalf of the South Carolina Office of the State Auditor.

The report, which covers fiscal years 2020 through 2024, outlines a breakdown in internal controls, unsupported

spending, and repeated violations of state law and local ordinances. Among the most serious findings: over \$90,000 in state funds were withheld because of missing audits, and the town's utility fund is running annual deficits of nearly \$300,000. These deficits were frequently covered by transfers from the general fund, totaling over \$842,000 across the review period.

The Index Journal reached out to the

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TERRICO HOLLAND



SUBMITTED

The sudsy foam party on Main Street in Hodges is a favorite during the Hodges-Cokesbury Fire Department's annual Outdoor Spring Festival. Check out festival happenings this this weekend. The foam party is 10 a.m.- noon Saturday.

Festival fun ahead

Festivals SPRINGing up in Lakelands

- **Annual Hodges Outdoor Spring Festival** this Thursday, Friday and Saturday. A soft opening is Thursday at 5 p.m., with carnival rides. A full slate of activities are scheduled 5-10 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturday. Visit the Hodges-Cokesbury Fire Department, 4410 Main St., Hodges for two days full of live music, food trucks, crafts, carnival rides and more. Visit the Hodges-Cokesbury Volunteer Fire Department Facebook page for updates and details.
- **Annual Abbeville Spring Festival**, May 1-3. Enjoy amusement rides, vendors, food and live entertainment. For details and the schedule visit: abbevillecitysc.com/167/Festivals-Events.
- **Annual Ware Shoals Catfish Festival**, May 21-24. With live entertainment, amusement rides, arts and crafts, and a huge catfish feast, this one does not disappoint. For details and the schedule, visit: catfishfestival.org.
- Still ahead are: the South Carolina Festival of Flowers in Greenwood during the month of June, with the main weekend June 5-8; the South Carolina Festival of Stars in Ninety Six June 26-28; and the South Carolina Festival of Discovery, with barbecue and blues all throughout Uptown Greenwood, July 10-12.

Hodges Outdoor Spring Festival starts Thursday, more coming

By St. Claire Donaghy
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Family-friendly spring festivals in the Lakelands abound in coming days.

Save dates for the Annual Hodges Outdoor Spring Festival this Thursday, Friday and Saturday, followed by the Abbeville Spring Festival and the Ware Shoals Catfish Festival, bookending things in May.

To begin, is the Annual Hodges Outdoor Spring Festival this Thursday, with a soft opening and carnival rides open to the public at 5 p.m., with more fun Friday and Saturday.

Tami Baber, Hodges Town Clerk

and vice president/events coordinator for Hodges-Cokesbury Fire Department said this spring event started in 2021 and happens, generally, rain or shine.

"It is a fan favorite among festivals in the Index-Journal's Readers' Choice contest," Baber said, averaging crowds in the 5,000-plus range, while also drawing out-of-town visitors from Aiken, Greenville, Charleston and Asheville. This festival is our fire department's biggest fundraiser of the year.

"A kid favorite is our Saturday foam party along Main Street in Hodges, 10 a.m. to noon," Baber

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D50 trustees begin reviewing superintendent candidates

By Mya Atten
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With the search in full swing, Greenwood County School District 50 trustees met behind closed doors to review the first round of superintendent candidates.

In March, trustees voted unanimously to hire the South Carolina School Board Association (SCSBA) to lead the superintendent search following Steve Glenn's retirement announcement in March.



MYA ATTEN | INDEX-JOURNAL

Judy LeGrand, South Carolina School Board Association superintendent search coordinator, said input from focus groups and an online survey will give trustees a better understanding of what the community wants in a superintendent, helping them narrow the search pool.

A total of 175 people participated in focus group meetings hosted April 2 and April 7, while 782 completed the online survey.

Participants included teachers, faculty, administrators, students and the public.

Among the qualities, LeGrand said the community is looking for are someone who is transparent, visible in schools, has classroom experience and values teacher input.

She added that the community wants a leader who can build on the district's elementary school success and carry it through the middle and high school levels.

"You can tell people are passionate in this community, and they love this community, and they want to see it move forward," LeGrand said.

The Index-Journal has attached a copy of the focus group and online survey summary with this article on indexjournal.com.

The superintendent job was advertised regionally and nationally, with the applications

See **TRUSTEES**, page 7A