

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING
OCTOBER 12, 2021
FAMILY COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

Members present were Travis Windham, Chairman; Gordon Eckley, Vice-Chairman; Alexander Boyd, member; Charles Beasley, member; Jackie Josey, member; Johnette Caughman, member Ron Fountain, member. Staff present were Alan Watkins, Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator/Clerk to Council; Danny Simon. Others present were Ruby Gibbs, Carrie Gass, David Branham, Donald Carter, Shirley and Randy Dixon, Bruce Heimberger and Kareem Wilson.

FOIA

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, all individuals requesting notifications were so notified.

PUBLIC HEARING
OCTOBER 12, 2021
FAMILY COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

A. AMENDMENT TO MULTI-COUNTY PARK AGREEMENT WITH KERSHAW COUNTY

The public hearing was opened at 9:31 on a motion made by Councilman Beasley, seconded by Vice-Chairman. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

Mr. Watkins said that this multi-county park agreement was set up a number of years ago to encourage growth in both counties. He said that if either one of the counties lands something, we would share 1%. He said this gives the county additional job credits from state and requires no investment from the county.

He said this multi-park is located at Exit 101, which is Prestage Farms, a large processing facility. Mr. Watkins said that we still do not have the final numbers yet, but this will be a benefit to the community.

Chairman Windham said that this multi-county park agreement was set up by the legislature as a tool that Department of Commerce recommended and sets guidelines for recruiting industry. He said that Prestage Farms would employ 300 people and have \$150,000 million investment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Donald Carter asked about environmental concerns with this facility. He said this land would not perk for homes there.

Chairman Windham said that the run off is going into their system.

Mr. Watkins said that the County has no control on what they allow on their business. He said that Kershaw County has complete control.

The public hearing closed at 9:37 a.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Beasley. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 12, 2021, 9:30 A.M.
FAMILY COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

OPEN MEETING, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Chairman Windham opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Vice-Chairman Eckley gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

REQUEST FOR MOTION ON ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDED AGENDA

Chairman Windham said there was a revision to the agenda. He said that Item 3A should be added to include Automatic Fire Aid Agreement with Kershaw County.

Councilperson Caughman made the motion to approve the agenda with the revision. Councilman Beasley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

REQUEST FOR MOTION ON ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2021

Councilman Boyd made the motion to approve the minutes from regular meeting of September 14, 2021 as mailed. Councilman Beasley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

AUTOMATIC FIRE AGREEMENT WITH KERSHAW COUNTY

Mr. Watkins said that the County had been working with Kershaw County on developing this fire agreement.

He said that if someone lives outside the 5 mile radius in an isolated area in Lee County and they have a fire, Kershaw County would automatically dispatch. Mr. Watkins said this would be only for structure fires.

Councilman Fountain made the motion to approve the Automatic Fire Agreement with Kershaw County. Vice-Chairman Eckley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

REQUEST FOR SECOND READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

A. AMENDMENT TO MULTI-COUNTY PARK AGREEMENT WITH KERSHAW COUNTY

Chairman Windham said that Council had just had the public hearing for this matter.

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve for second reading approval. Councilperson Caughman seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

REQUEST FOR MOTION ON THIRD READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

A. SALE OF UP TO 5 ACRES OF COUNTY PROPERTY TO EAST COAST COMPONENTS FOR AN EXPANSION OF THEIR CURRENT OPERATIONS. THE PROPERTY TO BE SOLD IS PART OF PARCEL LOCATED ON TAX MAP # 038-00-00-012-000.

Mr. Watkins said that East Coast Components was formerly known as Ag Truss. He said they are located behind James Industrial Park, and they are expanding their operations and getting into residential trusses that are used in construction of homes. He said they are interested in purchasing 5 acres contiguous to land that is right of the cotton warehouse. The price of the land is \$4500 for clear land and \$3500 for vegetative land with trees. Mr. Watkins said that Brasski Properties is the owner, and they have said it will take 12 months to build and they are investing \$500,000 and creating six new jobs.

Councilman Boyd made the motion to approve for third and final reading. Vice-Chairman Eckley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT FOR PUBLIC WORKS AND PARKS AND RECREATION

Mr. Watkins said that this matter had been discussed in the Buildings, Land & Property Committee. He said this equipment would be used to haul debris from manned sites, maintain roads and drainage systems. He said the County have had two roll off trucks and purchased another one in July. He said that both of the older ones are out of operation right now and it is very difficult to maintain sites with just one truck. He said Public Works needed to purchase another one and was using bond proceeds for the funding.

Mr. Watkins recommended Freightliner as the company from which to purchase the roll off truck at a cost of \$164,085. The purchase price was higher than one of the other quotes, but it

is available right now and Public Works is planning to sell one of the older units, and the proceeds would go towards the purchase price, making the price \$114,000.

Public Works is planning to purchase a bush hog for mowing, which is used to mow the parks, the airport property and waterways around the county. Mr. Watkins said the current one is having mechanical issues and needs updating.

Mr. Watkins said the cost of the equipment is \$19,458. He said the County currently has \$28,000 in the account that is set aside for proceeds from collection and recycling of scrap metal at various manned sites.

Parks and Recreation is also planning to purchase a small tractor for mowing, working on ballfields and construction projects. The purchase price for this piece of equipment is \$25,000.

Mr. Watkins said that recently, the Recreation Department had two zero turn John Deere mowers stolen. Parks and Recreation has already purchased one mower to replace one of the stolen ones. They would like to purchase a small tractor with more features than a zero turn that would allow them to do multiple things. He said the funding would come from insurance proceeds for a portion of the cost and the balance of funding would come from 2020 GO Bond.

Vice-Chairman Eckley said the Committee had met on this and felt the Director needed to proceed with the purchase.

Vice-Chairman Eckley made the motion to approve the Resolution to approve the purchase of equipment for Public Works and Parks and Recreation. Councilman Boyd seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

APPOINTMENT OF AZLEE P WILSON TO THE LIBRARY BOARD FOR DISTRICT 5

Councilperson Josey made the motion to approve the appointment of Azlee P. Wilson to the Library Board for District 5. Councilperson Caughman seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE

Councilperson Josey had no report.

Bruce Heimberger, who is serving as Interim Library Director, was present and gave a report to council. He said that he had applied for two grants, one of which would be for a delivery vehicle that would be delivering books in the rural communities for children.

Carrie Gass said that she was pleased with him so far and the future plans.

Chairman Windham said the position of Library Director was done by the Library Board.

B. PLANNING, TAXES & PERSONNEL

Councilman Beasley said that he had no meetings.

C. BUILDINGS, LAND & PROPERTY

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that his committee met to discuss the things on the agenda. He said they are having a ribbon cutting on October 19 at 3:30 at Levy Park for the Farmers Market.

Chairman Windham also added that the County was also honoring Councilman Addison with two park benches after the ribbon cutting.

D. PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilperson Caughman said she had no meetings.

Sheriff Danny Simon was present and said they were considering putting cameras on Exit 116 interchange in regards to the shooting last week where there was one death and four injured. He said that other counties are being affected by this violence. He said that he has talked with other counties and they are having the same problems with crime and violence that we are.

He went on to say that Sheriff's Department is receiving 5 cameras from the state.

Sheriff Simon said that he was losing one of his own and went on to say that J. D. Dellinger had been hired as the new Chief of Police for the City and was also losing another major to Department of Corrections. He said that he still has vacancies and are actively recruiting people.

E. RECREATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Councilman Boyd said that he did recommend getting new equipment that had been mentioned in the meeting and thanked Alan for his help in the process.

F. WAYS AND MEANS

Councilman Fountain said that he no meetings.

G. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Watkins said that COVID cases have come down and said that last month there were 100 cases and as of 10/11/21 there were 77 cases. He said that he continued to encourage vaccinations and practice safety protocols. He said that all county offices are open to the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Randy Dixon was present and asked what was going in the City of Bishopville in that when he walks, there is excess trash behind the old hospital and Chappell Park and asked if it was city or county responsibility. He also referenced the thefts and said the County used to lock gates and unlock early in the mornings and said that the county may not need to leave unsecured.

Mr. Dixon also referenced the court system and said that when people commit small crimes, maybe they need to pick up trash as their community service.

David Branham said that he appreciated what Mr. Dixon said in reference to trash and said that it was a huge problem and that Lee County was probably one of the worst counties in the state in reference to trash.

Mr. Branham also wanted to know how Lee County would be impacted in reference to the 2020 census and the reapportionment and how would it affect House seat 50.

Carrie Gass said that she had one observation and thanked Alan for coordinating the meeting for Pearl Fryar. She referenced the topiary artist working with Pearl Fryar and said that he has some good recommendations and would improve Lee County.

She also mentioned that Pearl Fryar should be honored in some way.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. COUNCIL WILL ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION ON A PROPERTY MATTER

Council entered Executive Session at 10:22 a.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Boyd.

Council came out of Executive Session at 10:41 on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilperson Josey. Chairman Windham said that no votes were taken.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Boyd.

CHAIRMAN

VICE-CHAIRMAN

CLERK TO COUNCIL

MINUTES APPROVED

LEE COUNTY



OFFICE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

ALAN W. WATKINS
ADMINISTRATOR

P.O. BOX 309
BISHOPVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA 29010
(803) 484-5341

JULIE P. STOKES
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

October 14, 2021

Mr. Randy Dixon
519 Bay Street
Bishopville, SC 29010

Dear Mr. Dixon:

In response to your concerns related to trash in the community, the areas you described regarding trash problems are inside the city limits of Bishopville and would be the responsibility of the City of Bishopville to address. The County has coordinated several trash cleanup days with SC DOT and the City of Bishopville in recent years and is hoping to have another event this fall. Obviously, the problem of litter throughout the county is a concern and has been discussed on several occasions by County Council. Despite efforts to have cleanup days, there is a lot of area to be covered throughout Lee County and any areas cleaned up are often littered again in short order. We are working with the Sheriff to offer more solutions from a law enforcement perspective, but due to the shortage of staffing in the Sheriff's Office, litter control is not as high a priority as other matters involving life safety and property theft.

With regards to the gate not being locked at Chappell Park, we have discussed this issue as well and feel the denial of citizens to access the recreation afforded in the park after hours by locking the gate outweighs the prevention of possible crime locking the gate would offer. The lock on the gate can be cut just as quickly as the locks around the buildings were removed and so the gate does not offer complete protection from theft.

Thank you for the concerns you shared and I hope the information being shared is beneficial.

Sincerely,



Alan Watkins

Cc: Travis Windham, Chairman- Lee County Council

LEE COUNTY



OFFICE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

ALAN W. WATKINS
ADMINISTRATOR

P.O. BOX 309
BISHOPVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA 29010
(803) 484-5341

JULIE P. STOKES
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

October 14, 2021

Mr. David Branham
2377 Red Hill Road
Bishopville, SC 29010

Dear Mr. Branham:

The problem of litter throughout the county is a concern and has been discussed on several occasions by County Council. The County has coordinated several trash cleanup days with SC DOT and the City of Bishopville in recent years and is hoping to have another event this fall. Despite efforts to have cleanup days, there is a lot of area to be covered throughout Lee County and any areas cleaned up are often littered again in short order. The State Legislature appropriated several million dollars for addressing litter in SC and SC DOT is working on a plan to provide more direct cleanup efforts and enforcement of littering laws with this funding.

We are working with the Sheriff to offer more solutions from a law enforcement perspective. Due to the shortage of staffing in the Sheriff's Office, litter control is difficult to focus on as it is not as high a priority as matters involving life safety and property theft. We have purchased some cameras to deploy in areas which are known to be used as dump sites for trash, tires, etc. to prosecute these activities and hopefully discourage this type of activity.

The Palmetto Pride program is coordinated by SC DOT and allows private groups such as churches, businesses, families, etc. to adopt sections of roadway for litter pickup. The program provides trash bags, pick-up sticks and reflective vests for volunteers. This program has had some success but needs more participants to have a more dramatic impact.

The County will continue to work this problem where we can, but it is a major issue that is a problem state-wide.

With regards to the impacts of the 2020 Census count on state aid to counties, we have been monitoring this situation for some time. Rural Counties advocated for, and the State Legislature approved, funding for a "Rural Stabilization Fund" for counties which saw a decline in

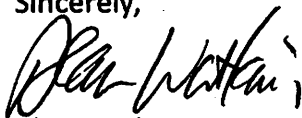
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population from the 2020 Census. This funding will allow counties of our size to receive as much as \$300,000 to replace dollars from the Local Government Fund which the state provides to assist counties efforts to support state services.

The Local Government Fund is allocated on a per capita basis and most counties will see a decline in recurring dollars as a result of the 2020 Census. While this additional funding is not a permanent solution to the problem associated with the LGF, the hope is it will eventually be approved as a recurring line item. The County currently receives approximately \$860,000 per year from the state in Local Government Fund support and the Rural Stabilization Funds will make the County whole as long as this funding is available.

Thank you for the concerns you shared and I hope the information being shared is beneficial to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan Watkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A".

Alan Watkins

Cc: Travis Windham, Chairman- Lee County Council