

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL  
SWEARING IN CEREMONY  
JANUARY 10, 2023  
MAIN COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

Councilman Charles A. Beasley, Councilperson Johnette Caughman and Gordon Eckley were all sworn in by Teresa Brown, Clerk of Court prior to the scheduled Council Meeting.

Chairman Windham congratulated all of them and said that he looked forward to working with them another four years.

Members present were Travis Windham, Chairman; Gordon Eckley, Vice-Chairman; Keel Addison, member; Charles A. Beasley, member; Jackie Josey, member; Johnette Caughman, member; Ron Fountain, member. Staff present were Alan Watkins, Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator/Clerk to Council; Paul Fata, Michael Davis, Lee Richardson, Tim DuBose, Connie Brown, Lisa Baker. Others present were Betty Addison, Marc Wood, John Boykin, Brian Raushenbach, John Wall, Ruby Gibbs, Carrie Gass, Celestine Boone, Roy Dixon, Shirley Dixon, Mattie Mack, Gloria Lewis, Nathaniel Best.

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC HEARING  
JANUARY 10, 2023, 9:30 A.M.  
MAIN COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing was opened at 9:30 on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilperson Caughman.

PUBLIC HEARING

- A. AUTHORIZING, PURSUANT TO TITLE 12, CHAPTER 44, AND TITLE 4, CHAPTER 1 AND TITLE 12, CHAPTER 6 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA 1976, AS AMENDED, THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE-IN-LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES AND SPECIAL SOURCE CREDIT AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN LEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA ("COUNTY") AND EFP, LLC AND WESTON SCIP 2, LLE, ACTING FOR THEMSELVES, ONE OR MORE CURRENT OR FUTURE AFFILIATES AND OTHER PROJECT COMPANIES (PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED AS PROJECT GRAPEFRUIT AND PROJECT GRAPEFRUIT LANDLORD AND COLLECTIVELY, "COMPANY"), PROVIDING FOR (1) A NEGOTIATED FEE-IN-LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES INCENTIVES; (2) CERTAIN SPECIAL SOURCE CREDITS TO BE APPLIED AGAINST FEES IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES; (3) MODIFYING A JOINT COUNTY INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS PARK BETWEEN LEE AND SUMTER COUNTIES TO AS TO ENLARGE THE PARK TO INCLUDE PROPERTY OF THE

COMPANY; (4) CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF FIRE SPRINKLER TAX CREDIT; AND (5) OTHER RELATED MATTERS

Mr. Watkins said the County had been working on this project for many months. He said this is a \$15 million industry located in the I-20 park at 227 Browntown Road. He said the building is 118,000 square feet and the company plans to employ 53 people over a three year period. Mr. Watkins said the starting pay is \$18.50 per hour and would go up to \$30 per hour and this company would provide benefits.

John Wall, the attorney representing this company, said the name of the company was EFD. He said this is the sixth plant in the United States and said they are very well backed. He said they do packaging for appliances, etc. and will be hiring the HR Director and the Plant Manager very soon.

Mr. Wall said they will open fully in August and plan to expand over two years.

Chairman Windham said this is a win for Lee County.

Vice-Chairman Eckley said they when they met with the company, they loved the location and loved everything about it. He thanked Brian Rausenbach and their staff for their hard work in making this happen.

The public hearing was closed at 9:40 a.m. on a motion made by Councilman Beasley, seconded by Vice-Chairman Eckley.

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LEE COUNTY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 10, 2023  
MAIN COURT ROOM - SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF LEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Vice-Chairman Eckley nominated Travis Windham to continue as Chairman. Councilman Beasley seconded the nomination. Vice-Chairman Eckley motioned for nominations to come to a close. Chairman Windham thanked everyone for their support and having confidence in him as Chairman. He said it has been an honor to serve as your Chairman.

Councilman Beasley nominated Councilman Eckley as Vice-Chairman. Councilperson Josey seconded the nomination. Councilman Beasley motioned for nominations to come to a close. Councilman Eckley thanked everyone for their support.

OPEN MEETING, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

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

REQUEST FOR MOTION ON ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDED AGENDA

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve the agenda as mailed. Councilperson Caughman 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 MINUTES OF DECEMBER 13, 2022

Councilperson Josey made the motion to approve the minutes as mailed. Councilman Beasley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

SHEHEEN, HANCOCK & GODWIN WILL PRESENT THE FY 22 AUDIT FOR LEE COUNTY

John Boykin, of Sheheen, Hancock & Godwin, presented the FY 22 Audit for Lee County. He said that Lee County received an unmodified opinion, the highest opinion that a county can receive on the audit. He said that the total fund balance for year ending June 30, 2022 was \$19,202,115. He said that of that fund balance, \$729,022 was restricted for debt service; \$11,949,865 was restricted for capital projects; \$32,546 was for Victim's Advocacy; \$6,490,682 is for unrestricted use.

Mr. Boykin thanked Connie Brown and her staff for their hard work in providing the necessary documents needed to prepare the audit.

Chairman Windham said there is a team behind the scenes of Alan Watkins, Connie Brown, Lisa Baker, and Cecil Stevens that works hard to provide information for the audit.

Mr. Watkins said that it's important to remember that a lot of funding the County receives is for designated projects and our staff ensures that these monies are spent accordingly.

He thanked Sheheen, Hancock & Godwin for doing such a thorough review of the county's books and insuring that every dollar is being spent as approved.

REQUEST FOR MOTION ON SECOND READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

- A. AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 44 OF TITLE 12, SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS, 1976, AS AMENDED, THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF

A FEE AGREEMENT BETWEEN LEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AND PROJECT SWAN – LEE AND CERTAIN AFFILIATES, THE INCLUSION OF SPECIAL SOURCE CREDITS, AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS.

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Mr. Watkins said this is a solar development in the Ashland Stokes Bridge area. He said this will be a \$53 million solar technology investment. Mr. Watkins said there will be a public hearing and third reading in February.

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

Mr. Watkins added these projects are not with Duke Energy. He said they are selling power to Duke Energy. He said this is a group of investors that are developing this project independent of Duke Energy. building a solar investment.

He said the tax revenue will be approximately \$160,000 per year.

B. AN ORDINANCE TRANSFERRING AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT THE CITY OF BISHOPVILLE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS TO THE LEE COUNTY REGISTRATION ELECTION COMMISSION

Mr. Watkins said that Lee County Registration Election Commission will conduct the elections for the City of Bishopville.

Vice-Chairman Eckley made the motion to approve for second reading. Councilperson Josey seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

REQUEST FOR THIRD READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

- A. AUTHORIZING, PURSUANT TO TITLE 12, CHAPTER 44, AND TITLE 4, CHAPTER 1 AND TITLE 12, CHAPTER 6 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA 1976, AS AMENDED, THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF FEE-IN-LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES AND SPECIAL SOURCE CREDIT AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN LEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA ("COUNTY") AND EFP, LLC AND WESTON SCIP 2, LLC, ACTING FOR THEMSELVES, ONE OR MORE CURRENT OR FUTURE AFFILIATES AND OTHER PROJECT COMPANIES (PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED AS PROJECT GRAPEFRUIT AND PROJECT GRAPEFRUIT LANDLORD AND COLLECTIVELY, "COMPANY"); PROVIDING FOR (1) A NEGOTIATED FEE-IN-LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES INCENTIVES; (2) CERTAIN SPECIAL SOURCE CREDITS TO BE APPLIED AGAINST FEES-IN-LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES; (3) MODIFYING A JOINT COUNTY INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS PARK BETWEEN LEE AND SUMTER COUNTIES TO AS TO ENLARGE THE PARK TO INCLUDE PROPERTY OF THE COMPANY; (4) CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF FIRE SPRINKLER TAX CREDIT; AND (5) OTHER RELATED MATTERS

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Mr. Watkins said this a \$15.3 million investment located at 227 Browntown Road that will provide 53 jobs and plans to be operational in August.

Vice-Chairman Eckley made the motion to approve for third and final reading. Councilperson Josey 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 invited everyone to the MLK Breakfast on Monday, January 16 at 9:00 at Chappell Park.

Lee Richardson, from the Lee County Library, said the Library will be hosting Coffee and Conversation on Thursday, February 2 from 8:30 – 9:30 where they will be talking to community leaders. She said that Alan Watkins will be the first guest speaker.

##### B. PLANNING, TAXES & PERSONNEL

Councilman Beasley said that he had no meetings. He commended Administrator and Department Heads on the audit. He said that a lot of money had come through our budget and all of the news today was positive. He said that the Administrator has handled everything and has done a good job. Councilman Beasley said that it takes a team effort and he appreciated the hard work of everyone.

##### C. BUILDINGS, LAND & PROPERTY

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that Brian Raushenbach and Jay Schwedler do a great job and they have top notch people working for them.

He also commented that EMS building is progressing along.

##### D. PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilperson Caughman said she had no meetings.

Tim DuBose said that the paramedic program is going well with 55 signed up and 10 active. He said that they had done 260 visits. He said they have partnered with different agencies and have helped people get insurance and install handicap ramps.

Tim DuBose also commented they have received the USDA grant funds and they have ordered life packs, monitors, ultrasound equipment, Lucas devices.

He said the Federal government is demanding upgrades and the 911 center is going to a new program and this will provide vital access to other counties.

Mr. DuBose said that E-911 received 36,000 calls and said that EMS had 4300 calls.

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Chairman Windham said that Tim DuBose has elevated the County. He said that he has been successful in obtaining grants and training personnel.

Councilperson Caughman thanked him for his leadership.

#### E. RECREATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Councilman Addison said that he was glad to be here.

Mr. Watkins commented that he was working with contractors on installing park equipment. He said they have installed two walking tracks and two new basketball courts.

He said he hoped to have all playground equipment installed by April, 2023.

He said they were playing basketball games this week and baseball registration would begin soon.

Chairman Windham said that the City had put up lights around Grammar School Park around the walking track.

#### F. WAYS AND MEANS

Councilman Fountain said that he no meetings but said that budget meetings will be starting soon.

#### G. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Watkins said there had been some concern on social media about the stop lights in town being slow. He said that he talked with DOT and they said there is a sensor in the pavement that controls the stop lights that they pulled out during the paving of the street. Mr. Watkins said that he was told that the sensor will be replaced when the paving is complete, and the stop lights will go back to the way they were.

Mr. Watkins said that he has a pre-construction meeting on Thursday regarding the sidewalks and lighting for Exit 116.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mattie Mack said she was concerned about the readiness for jobs at the new industry locating in Lee County.

Brian Rauschenbach responded to her concern and said this involves the State and ReadySC can help with training, along with SC Works.

Roy Dixon thanked Alan for answering questions and asked if he could get a copy of the audit.

Roy Dixon gave Council a copy of a FOIA request which entailed requesting a copy of Wayne Capell's contract with Lee County. Chairman Windham told him he could get a copy.

Tim DuBose said that Lee County was starting Relay for Life back up and next meeting would be February 2, 2023 at 6:00 at EMS.

Nathaniel Best applauded the efficient work of the Council. He asked to clarify what year the audit was for. Mr. Watkins said that it was for year 22 and noted there was an error on agenda that said it was for year 23.

Mr. Best also referenced Project Swan and said this will be possible revenue in taxes for Lee County and asked if the residents will see a reduction in taxes as a result of this project. He also asked how the roads were selected for paving in Lynchburg.

Andre Laws commented that the Magnolia Fest is going to be in May.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Beasley.

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CHAIRMAN

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VICE-CHAIRMAN

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CLERK TO COUNCIL

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MINUTES APPROVED

