

**LEE COUNTY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
MAIN COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE**

Members present were Travis Windham, Chairman; Gordon Eckley, Vice-Chairman; Charles Beasley, member; Jackie Josey, member; Ron Fountain, member; Alexander Boyd. Staff present were Alan Watkins, Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator/Clerk to Council; Mike Bedenbaugh, Paul Fata, Danny Simon. Others present were Bernard McDaniel, Carrie Gass, Ruby Gibbs, Brian Raushenbach, Randy and Shirley Dixon, Regina Demary, Kareem Wilson, Ennis Bryant

FOIA

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

**PUBLIC HEARING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
MAIN COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE**

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 THE PARCEL LOCATED ON TAX MAP. #038-00-00-012-000.

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

Mr. Watkins said this property is located at the back corner of James Industrial Park and was formerly known as Ag Truss. He said they manufacture truss systems for poultry systems and residences.

He said the County owns a good bit of property back there but is only looking to sell a 5 acre parcel, which is mostly open land and trees. The selling price is \$4500 per acre for the open area and \$3500 for the land with the trees, making it a total of five acres. They plan to do additional construction and create jobs. Mr. Watkins said he will have more information by third reading. He said the parcel of land is not certified, so the property is not as valuable as other property in the park.

Brian Raushenbach was present and said that he had been working with Alan on this project.

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Councilman Beasley said that this was good for the County. He said that any time you can create more jobs, it makes it a good investment for the county.

Mr. Raushenbach said that this was necessary for this company to take it to the next level for more jobs. He said they definitely needed storage because business was booming.

The public hearing was closed at 9:39 a.m. on a motion made by Councilman Beasley, seconded by Vice-Chairman Eckley.

**LEE COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
MAIN COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR 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

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve the agenda as mailed. Councilperson Josey 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 AUGUST 10, 2021

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

REQUEST FOR MOTION ON FIRST READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

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

Mr. Watkins said that Kershaw County is working on a fee agreement with a large industry and they asked Lee County to partner with them. He said an existing agreement is in place and this would be a revision to the existing agreement. Mr. Watkins said that Lee County would receive 1% of FILO and required no investment from Lee County.

Chairman Windham said that the reason that Kershaw County is giving 1% to Lee County is that they will receive incentives from the state.

Mr. Watkins said the public hearing regarding this matter would be at the next meeting in October.

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATOR TO SIGN ON BEHALF OF THE COUNTY TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF BISHOPVILLE TO PERMIT A MAGISTRATE TO PRESIDE OVER THE BISHOPVILLE MUNICIPAL COURT

Mr. Watkins said the City of Bishopville is forming a municipal court to handle local ordinance code enforcements on property matters. The agreement states that the City of Bishopville agrees to reimburse the County for any costs for the use of a Magistrate. Mr. Watkins said that Judge Shirley Davidson will be the main judge presiding over this court, but her duties as a County Magistrate will take precedence.

Chairman Windham said that this was an example of the City and County working together. He recognized City Councilman Ennis Bryant in working with the County on this project.

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

REQUEST FOR SECOND 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.

Chairman Windham said this matter was just discussed in the public hearing.

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

REQUEST FOR THIRD READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

- A. CONTRACT FOR DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTION SERVICES

Mr. Watkins said the public hearing was held at the last meeting. He said this contract with Wayne Capell was to provide delinquent tax services. He said Mr. Capell had performed these duties as a separate department but in conjunction with his duties as County Treasurer. Mr. Watkins said that we are in the middle of a tax cycle and Mrs. Baker did not feel comfortable taking on those duties at this time. Mr. Watkins said that Mr. Capell would be paid \$24,350 for 6 months for a period of July 1 – December 31, and the salary for a complete year would be \$48,700. He was paid \$50,000 last year, which included pension and social security. Mr. Watkins said that he would be paid as a third party vendor and the County would save \$13,500

a year. The only difference is how we pay Mr. Capell. The County will receive the same level of service.

Chairman Windham said that this is a very important position with important responsibilities and deadlines.

Councilman Beasley 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.

B. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH DJJ FOR HOUSING LEE COUNTY YOUTH

Mr. Watkins said this is an annual contract that the County has with DJJ. The contract states that any Lee County youth offenders aged 17 and under who are arrested and detained must be housed at DJJ in Columbia because underage youths cannot be housed at Sumter/Lee Correctional. The rate of housing is \$50 per day and has continued at that rate for several years. The County typically has very little use of the facility.

Councilman Fountain made the motion to approve for third and final reading. Councilman Beasley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE

Ms. Regina Nesmith-Demary was present to brief Council on a grant regarding physical activity, nutrition, and social connectiveness in the county, broken down by population.

She also mentioned that Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church had received a grant that would help with a food pantry. She also mentioned that \$2500 had been allocated to the Farmers Market Site for signage and marketing.

Ms. Demary said that Council on Aging was going to receive \$9,000 that would be used for outdoor benches and water cooler.

Councilperson Josey thanked Ms. Demary for coming to share with the Council.

Councilperson Josey also recognized Bernard McDaniel to give a report on the school district. He said that school had been back in session for about 5 weeks so far. He said that 50 students had either tested positive for COVID or was quarantined. He said that he wanted to commend the parents of the school on how they were having their children tested.

Councilperson Josey thanked Mr. McDaniel for sharing with the Council.

B. PLANNING, TAXES & PERSONNEL

Councilman Beasley said that they had no meetings.

C. BUILDINGS, LAND & PROPERTY

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that construction on the spec building is underway. He recognized Brian Raushenbach to give an update on the spec building.

Mr. Raushenbach said that Lee County spec building is almost complete. He said that Lee County partnered with Department of Commerce to construct a spec building in the amount of \$2.25 million to expand the 80,000 square foot existing site ready pad. He said that the spec building would be a 50,000 square foot building and will have four walls and a roof with a partial concrete pad. He said the building would be complete in October, 2021. He said the walls are up and the roof is being finished. Mr. Raushenbach said that this increased the marketability of the building to a prospect.

He said the County is currently going through site recertification. He also referenced the site ready pads at the Industrial Park and said this speeds up the process when a prospect wants to locate a business here.

Chairman Windham said that Lee County would not have Crowne Laundry today if we had not had a spec building available. He said they are up to 215 employees and has increased their wages.

D. PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilperson Caughman not here. Mr. Watkins said there was a fire at the Pilot Station. Mike Bedenbaugh said that it affected three fuel tank bays and took about six hours to put out.

Sheriff Danny Simon said that he was finding a replacement for the scanner at the back door. He said that he was getting a body scanner with a temperature reading and these would be for the courthouse and magistrate court. He said that he has seen an increase in break-ins and has seen an increase in thefts of trailers, trucks, lawnmowers and ATVs.

He said that he is still looking for applicants and he currently has seven openings. He mentioned that Officer Mikkos was inducted into Hall of Fame.

Chairman Windham thanked him for his report.

E. RECREATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Councilman Boyd said that he met with Administrator and staff over a week ago and appreciates Mr. Watkins arranging the meeting. He thanked Mr. Watkins for the fine job that he's done in recreation and providing recreation for the people of Lee County.

Mr. Watkins said that \$4.6 million has been spent in recreation over the last 15 years with capital improvements with funding from the penny sales tax, grants, local and state funding.

F. WAYS AND MEANS

Councilman Fountain said that he had no meetings.

G. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Watkins said that Lee County has 102 active cases of people who tested positive in the last 14 days. This number is up from 33 a month ago. He said as the numbers are plateauing, he encouraged people to be vaccinated and practice safety. He said the county offices are open and safety measures continue to be in place, as required by the Chief Justice.

He said that football registration numbers are low right now, but Recreation plans to offer some type of activity for kids.

Mr. Watkins attended a meeting concerning the Pearl Fryar Garden with Jane Przybysz, who has obtained a grant in the amount of \$50,000 for Central Carolina to reopen the garden. Ms. Przybysz is preparing for a large grant through the MELON Foundation to help fund the Pearl Fryar Garden. There is a meeting scheduled on September 28 at 5:30 p.m. at Chappell Park to discuss a grant application that will ensure long term use of the Pearl Fryar Garden.

Mr. Watkins discussed the TAP project and said that SCDOT and Duke Energy's design work is done and said that Duke is working on lighting. He said it will pick up at Broad Acres to Browntown Road with sidewalk and lighting and past that will be lighting and sidewalk on both sides. He said that bidding will not be put out until next year.

Chairman Windham said there's probably not an attraction to draw attention and visitors more than Pearl Fryar Gardens.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carrie Gass – she said she was so pleased to hear Council mention Pearl Fryar and commended Council for their involvement. She said that she is understanding that a lot of money is coming for infrastructure. She said that when this comes, she would like to see roads paved not patched or repaired.

Chairman Windham said that \$2 million has been appropriated to resurface from St. Charles Rd. to Highway 341 and it will take two years to complete work.

He said that DOT has estimated that the average daily count for trucks on Main Street is 1280.

Randy Dixon said that he pays attention to the safety and conditions of the roads and asked if the County is trying to do anything about the 18 wheelers on Main Street.

Chairman Windham responded that the County should have a decision about the truck route as a build or no build by the spring.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Beasley.

CHAIRMAN

VICE-CHAIRMAN

CLERK TO COUNCIL

MINUTES APPROVED