

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
JANUARY 14, 2020  
FAMILY COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

Members present were Travis Windham, Chairman; David Addison, member; Charles A. Beasley, member; Johnette Caughman; Ron Fountain, member. Staff present were Alan Watkins, Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator/Clerk to Council; Teresa Brown, Paul Fata. Others present were Gloria Small, Doug Mixon, R. L. Brown, Billy Tention, Carrie Gass, Ron Williams, Hattie Smith, Bobbi Adams, Andre Laws, Gee Whetsel.

**FOIA**

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

**OPEN MEETING, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Chairman Windham opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Councilman Addison 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 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 OF DECEMBER 10, 2019 AND CALLED MEETING OF DECEMBER 31, 2019**

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve the minutes from regular meeting of December 10, 2019 and called meeting minutes of December 31, 2019 as written. Councilman Addison seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

**RON WILLIAMS, OF THE CENSUS BUREAU, WILL UPDATE COUNCIL ON THE CENSUS**

Mr. Williams gave an overview of the census and explained the importance of getting an accurate count for Lee County. He said that every household will receive four notifications, i.e., they can complete their form online, by phone or mail, and if no response is received, a census person will come to your house.

Chairman Windham thanked Mr. Williams for coming and sharing the information with the council.

**APPOINTMENTS OF ROBIN BRUNSON AND ELIZABETH KREMER TO THE LEE COUNTY DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS BOARD**

Councilperson Caughman made the motion to approve the appointments of Robin Brunson and Elizabeth Kremer to the Lee County Disabilities and Special Needs Board. Councilman Beasley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

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Chairman Windham recognized Billy Tention and Mr. Tention introduced his pastor, Mr. R. L. Brown, of Mt. Olive AME Church.

Chairman Windham said that Councilperson Josey had fallen and was recovering from the fall and could not be here today. He also said that Vice-Chairman Eckley was out of town.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE**

Councilperson Josey not here. Mr. Watkins said that MLK Breakfast is Monday, January 19 at 8:00 a.m. at Lee Central High School. He said the public is invited and the County helped to sponsor this event.

**B. PLANNING, TAXES & PERSONNEL**

Councilman Beasley said that his committee did not have any meetings.

**C. BUILDINGS, LAND & PROPERTY**

Vice-Chairman Eckley not here. Mr. Watkins said the property for the future fire station at Lucknow has been surveyed and they are waiting on the attorney to finalize documents.

He said that he has received calls about the work at I-20 Park. He said that the work being done are site ready pads in which dirt on the pads has been graded and ready for an industry to locate there.

Mr. Watkins also said the carpet and the painting at the Magistrate and Sheriff's offices are complete. He said the work is complete on the pews in the court room and said the woodwork looks a lot better.

D. PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilperson Caughman said her committee had no meetings.

E. RECREATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Councilman Addison said that his committee did not have any meetings.

Mr. Watkins said the letter had been sent to the Legislative Delegation regarding the PARD money for recreation projects. He said there is currently \$27,000 that has to be spent by May 31 and if it is not spent by that date, the funds will be redistributed to other counties. Mr. Watkins said that all projects are 80/20 match and all projects have to be approved by the legislative delegation to spend the money.

Mr. Watkins said the application should be sent to PRT by April 15 with all invoices paid by May 31.

Mr. Watkins said that basketball registration has been completed and the first game is on Saturday. He said they will be playing teams in Hartsville, Darlington, and Lamar.

He said that Angela Simon is running the Parks and Rec office and Shannon Reddick is in charge of maintenance and recreation programs. Mr. Watkins said he meets with them on a regular basis and is very proud of the job they are doing.

Councilman Beasley asked about the walking track at Woodrow. Mr. Watkins said that the state approves a certain amount of money for each county from BINGO money. He said the county has three years to spend it. He said that Lee County has a total of \$82,659.27 set aside in Columbia for recreation projects. Mr. Watkins said that \$26,710 is 2018 money that could be lost. He said that delegation has to approve the projects for that money or it could be lost. He said that the county applied for \$32,000, but was only approved for \$23,000, which was the amount that was going to be lost. The County spent \$29,000 anyway and made up the difference with local fund.

Chairman Windham asked Billy Tention what the problem was and Mr. Watkins reviewed the PRT information again regarding the walking track at Woodrow.

Mr. Watkins said that the County sent in projects for \$32,000, the project was cut to \$23,000, which is the amount that we were going to lose if not spent. He said the County was unable to make up the difference of the \$9,000, however the County did try to do a dirt walking track. Mr. Watkins said that you see these dirt walking tracks in other counties our size.

Mr. Tention asked if it was possible to get the remaining funds to finish the project at Woodrow. Mr. Watkins responded that the County has already spent \$30,000 at Woodrow. He said that we have spent money in West Lee Community. Mr. Watkins said that the County has to balance out work in other communities.

Councilman Beasley said that there was \$82,659 available, and the County may get all of it and may not get it.

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Chairman Windham said the problem is getting the signatures. Mr. Watkins said the application has to be in Columbia with signatures by April 15.

Councilman Addison said that Parks and Rec does not have a director now but Alan is doing a good job. Councilman Addison said that we may get a director, but as long as it's working we would continue with things as is.

#### F. WAYS AND MEANS

No meetings.

#### G. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Watkins said the dilapidated housing grant has been awarded and 31 homes in the Harlem Blue Pond area would be done. He said the City is seeking waivers for property owners and asbestos testing on all properties will be put out for bid. He said Santee Lynches COG is overseeing this project for the City.

Mr. Watkins said there is a Census Meeting scheduled for January 28, 2020 and we are currently reaching out to community partners. He said it's very important for everyone to be counted.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Gloria Small asked that once the money is spent in the Harlem Blue Pond area, what is the County going to do in other areas. Mr. Watkins said that the grant has to be done in a defined area. He said that funding is available each year and the City and County can apply each year and move to different areas.

Councilman Addison thanked Carrie Gass for her help in the demolition list.

Councilman Addison asked Mr. Watkins if the lots would be cleaned up as well. Mr. Watkins said that it is required that the lots of the properties be cleaned as well.

Carrie Gass invited Reverend Ernest Frierson, pastor of Mechanicsville Church, to the meeting but he has been sick and was unable to attend. She said that was aware of a meeting that the City and County met with DOT to extend the sidewalks on Highway 15 and asked why this was being done.

Mr. Watkins said that we wanted to make it accessible for jobs and food for residents that have to walk and to make it more attractive for tourists coming off the interstate. He said that this would be done in conjunction with lighting for interchange. He said that 80% of the funds come from the Federal Government. He said that the County was doing a project in an unincorporated part of the county because the County cannot apply for funds inside the city limits.

Carrie Gass said that trees are being taken down in different areas in town and wanted to know who is doing the work. Chairman Windham said that Duke Power is taking trees down if they are near a power line.

Mrs. Gass said she wanted a list of the 31 homes that were being torn down.

Andre Laws said that he is having some issues with the waste management site in Lynchburg. He said there is a deep hole that needs to be addressed.

He also said that he has a problem with the county policy with removal of tires and TVs. He said that he is seeing a lot of tires on the side of the road. He said that some people have asked him why they have to travel so far to the two sites that accept TVs and tires. He wanted to know if the County could add an additional location to accept tires and TVs. Mr. Watkins said that he would look into it.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m. on a motion made by Councilman Beasley, seconded by Councilman Addison.

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CHAIRMAN

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VICE-CHAIRMAN

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CLERK TO COUNCIL

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MINUTES APPROVED