

**LEE COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 11, 2020
FAMILY COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE**

Members present were Travis Windham, Chairman; Gordon Eckley, Vice-Chairman; Charles A. Beasley, member; Jackie Josey, member; Johnette Caughman, member; Ron Fountain, member. Staff present were Alan Watkins, Assistant Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator/Clerk to Council; Michael Davis, Teresa Brown. Others present were Andre Laws, Dorothy Mills, Carrie Gass, Hattie Smith, Eddie Donald, Carly Spivey, Pat Carter, Jay Schwedler.

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. Vice-Chairman Eckley gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

REQUEST FOR MOTION ON ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDED AGENDA

Councilperson Josey 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 JANUARY 14, 2020

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve the minutes from regular meeting of January 14, 2020 as written. Councilman Fountain seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

JAY SCHWEDLER, OF THE LINK, WILL UPDATE COUNCIL ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTY

Mr. Schwedler updated Council on the pads at the I-20 Industrial Park and said they are underway. He said there would be three pads with sizes ranging from 80,000 square feet to 250,000 square feet. He said this is basically an elevated compacted area and would save an industry about 3-5 months of time in site preparation.

Mr. Schwedler said has is working with the Legislative Delegation on acquiring additional funding for economic development to help fund another spec building.

Mr. Schwedler referenced the James Industrial Park certified sites and said the Department of Commerce had changed the certified sites program to the Palmetto Sites Program, which is funded through Department of Commerce. He said that now an outside vendor will conduct a prospect visit.

He said The Link has been doing a lot of marketing with the Esteam Festival and said that the Stem Lab would be unveiled on February 18 at Lee Central Middle School.

Mr. Schwedler also commented that Carolina Metal Finishing just completed their expansion.

Chairman Windham commented that 40% of the prospects come from Department of Commerce, 40% from The Link and 20% from other sources.

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that Jay has assembled a staff that he would put up against anybody in the State.

Chairman Windham thanked Mr. Schwedler for coming.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW THIRD CIRCUIT PUBLIC DEFENDER, MR EDGAR "EDDIE" DONNARD

Mr. Donnald introduced himself and his assistant, Carly Spivey and said he looked forward to working with Lee County.

REQUEST FOR FIRST READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

A. UPGRADE OF EXISTING COURTHOUSE PHONE SYSTEM

Mr. Watkins said that the County has had ongoing problems with the current system, which is seven years old. He said that it is an automated system and does not recognize touch tones to access system. Mr. Watkins said the County currently deals with a third party and Farmers Telephone.

He said the County met with Farmers to update and consider allowing us to use them exclusively and upgrade phone system. Mr. Watkins said the Buildings, Land and Property Committee met and voted to negotiate with Farmers and purchase entire phone system.

Mr. Watkins said that a final recommendation will be given at second reading.

Vice-Chairman Eckley made the motion to approve the upgrade of the Courthouse phone system. Councilman Beasley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

B. LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT OF MOTOR GRADER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Watkins said that he met with Buildings, Land and Property Committee and discussed the two bids received on a Caterpillar and John Deere. They voted to purchase John Deere in the amount of \$211,475. He said that a decision would be made as to the financing by second reading.

Councilperson Caughman 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.

C. PURCHASE OF VARIOUS PUBLIC WORKS EQUIPMENT

1. Work Truck

The Buildings, Land & Property met and voted to purchase a Chevrolet 4 x 4 truck in the amount of \$35,600.

2. Trash Compactor

The Buildings, Land & Property met and voted to purchase one for \$20,000, which is per unit with power unit.

3. Modification of Roll-off Truck

The Buildings, Land & Property met and discussed. Mr. Watkins said that two compactors were purchased last year. He said the Committee discussed retrofitting the truck to accommodate more hauling. He said the cost of the upgrade was \$5400.

Mr. Watkins said that funding for these items would be taken from the balance of the proceeds the County received on the sale of the 2014 Motor Grader. He said this machine was sold through Public Auction at the end of a 5-year lease purchase for \$150,000. The final payment for the motor grader was \$86,144.74, which left a balance of proceeds over the final cost of \$63,855.26 to use for the purchase of additional equipment.

The total for the additional equipment listed above for Public Works is \$60,585.

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve for first reading approval. Vice-Chairman Eckley 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 said she was not able to attend the MLK Breakfast but said that Ms. Gass was present and asked her to give an update on the breakfast. Ms. Gass said it was a success and one of the best they have ever had. She said the spotlight was Ruby Gibbs.

Councilperson Josey recognized Wanda Greene, a rural health agent from Clemson Extension to give a report.

Ms. Greene said Lee County has one of the highest obesity rates in the state. She said she is working with the City and County Councils to do address this.

She talked about the Food Share program, located in Mount Calvary Baptist Church. She said that this food comes from distribution centers. She said the baskets come with fruits and vegetables. She said the small container is \$15 and the large is \$20. Ms. Greene said they are partnering with USC School of Medicine in this project also. She said that you may purchase these as of 2/28 but they are taking orders now. She said she would try to bring a basket to the next meeting so people could see the quality of the produce.

Chairman Windham said that he attended the MLK Breakfast and said that he thought approximately 225 people attended. He said that Alexander Boyd's grandson was the speaker and did a great job. Chairman Windham also recognized Ruby Gibbs and told her this recognition was well deserved.

B. PLANNING, TAXES & PERSONNEL

Councilman Beasley said that his committee did not meet and he had no report.

C. BUILDINGS, LAND & PROPERTY

Vice-Chairman Eckley said his committee met last Thursday on the agenda items listed.

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that the county's 2014 motor motor grader 5 year lease is coming to an end. He said the County put it on Gov Deals, and the highest bid we could get was \$86,000. The County listed it again and it sold for \$150,000, which is the extra money the County is using to purchase the new motor grader. He said the County is trying to get into a cycle where they purchase new equipment on a regular basis in an effort to cut down on maintenance costs.

D. PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilperson Caughman said they had no meetings. She did remind everyone of the Relay for Life meeting scheduled for February 24 and encouraged everyone to participate.

E. RECREATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Chairman Windham said that Councilman Addison had a conflict and was not able to attend today.

Mr. Watkins said that basketball is going on and they have started baseball registration, which would continue until the end of February.

F. WAYS AND MEANS

Councilman Fountain said they had no meetings, but said it is almost time to start the new budget.

G. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Watkins that Lee County is in the process of forming a Complete Count Committee to encourage participation in the census. The next meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. at the Chappell Gym.

He said that training for the Census should start in March and continue through April and May. He said the impact that each individual can cost \$1500 per year, which equals \$15,000 per person over a decade.

He also reported that he attended the Carolina Scholars Program at the Lee County Campus of Central Carolina. He said that this has been a great partnership with Central Carolina for seniors and the numbers from both schools are growing.

Mr. Watkins said that a special celebration will be held on Memorial Day this year in Lee County. He said that Major James Capers, a retired marine Corporal Major, will be honored with a bronze relief recognizing his efforts. The bronze statue will be placed in the Memorial Park.

Mr. Watkins also mentioned that on February 13, 2020 from 10:00 – 2:00, the Parks and Rec will host a Real ID mobile sign up, which will allow you to get your real ID here. He said that you have until the end of the year to get this ID. He said that you will need three forms of ID, which can be Birth Certificate, SS card, current Driver's License, Bank Statement.

Vice-Chairman Eckley mentioned that graduates from REL or Lee Central with a C average can go to Central Carolina for two years free.

Chairman Windham recognized Michael Davis, Teresa Brown, Dorothy Mills, and Andre Laws.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carrie Gass invited everyone to the Lee County NAACP Fundraiser Banquet on Saturday, February 15, 2020 at 6 p.m. at the Bishopville Memorial Gym with a \$25 donation.

Andre Laws thanked the Public Works for the fast work in repairing the hole in Lynchburg. He said that he had a conversation with Mr. Watkins about working with the manned sites in Lynchburg in regards to taking TVs and tires.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Beasley.

CHAIRMAN

VICE-CHAIRMAN

CLERK TO COUNCIL

MINUTES APPROVED