

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 13, 2024
MAIN COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

Members present were Travis Windham, Chairman; Gordon Eckley, Vice-Chairman; Keel Addison, member; Charles A. Beasley, member; Jackie Josey, member; Ron Fountain, member. Staff present were Alan Watkins, Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator/Clerk to Council; Paul Fata, Michael Davis, Teresa Brown. Others present was Mattie Mack.

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

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 JANUARY 9, 2024

Vice-Chairman Eckley made the motion to approve the minutes from regular meeting of January 9, 2024 as written. Councilperson Josey seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

Chairman Windham did note that Councilperson Caughman was not present due to a conflict. He said that Councilperson Caughman had lost her son very recently and asked that everyone continue to remember her and her family in prayer.

REQUEST FOR MOTION ON ADOPTION OF FIRST READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

- A. AN AMENDED AND RESTATED ORDINANCE TO CREATE A JOINT MULTI-COUNTY BUSINESS PARK WITH KERSHAW COUNTY, THIS MULTI-COUNTY BUSINESS PARK TO BE COMPRISED OF PROPERTY LOCATED IN LEE COUNTY AND KERSHAW COUNTY AND ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS OF 1976 4-1—70, ET SEQUITUR, AS AMENDED; TO PROVIDE FOR AN AMENDED WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH KERSHAW COUNTY PROVIDING FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE PARK, THE PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE APPLICATION, AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF FEES IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES TO THE COUNTIES AND RELEVANT TAXING ENTITIES; AND, TO PROVIDE THAT JOBS TAX CREDITS, ALLOWED BY LAW BE PROVIDED FOR INDUSTRIES LOCATING IN SAID PARK, AND TO PERMIT A USER FEE IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXATION.

Mr. Watkins said that Lee County has a multi-county park agreement with several counties, and we are included in Kershaw County's multi-county park. Mr. Watkins said that the main County gets 99% of the revenue generated and the partnering county gets 1% of any revenue. He said that a solar company would be locating in Kershaw County and the purpose of this agreement is to include the parcel for the new development in current agreement. He said there was no cost for Lee County to be a part of the multi-county park agreement. Mr. Watkins said that Council would have a public hearing at the March meeting.

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CITY/COUNTY NEWSLETTER

Mr. Watkins said that the matter of keeping the public informed has been discussed as part of the effort to start a newsletter and the intent would be to make more information available to the public. This newsletter would promote current news, including press releases and will increase the social media presence for the County and City.

This resolution will have authorize Mr. Watkins and City Administrator to come up with a plan and budget to initiate the process.

Chairman Windham said that we need to get the message out to more people. Mr. Watkins said that the County is not trying to compete with the newspaper in any way.

Vice-Chairman Eckley made the motion to approve the Resolution to develop a City/County newsletter. Councilman Beasley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF GLORIA HARRIOTT TO THE LEE COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD FOR DISTRICT 5

Councilperson Josey made the motion to approve Gloria Harriott to the Lee County Library Board for District 5.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE

Councilperson Josey said she attended the MLK Breakfast in January. She said that it was well attended, with several people from the county attending. She said that Rev. Conyers from New Zion AME Church was the speaker.

Councilperson Josey also mentioned that John Caughman, son of Councilperson Caughman and a former county employee, had recently passed away, and she encouraged everyone to keep them in their thoughts and prayers.

Councilperson Josey also mentioned the annual Chamber of Commerce Luncheon on March 14 at Chappell Park.

B. PLANNING, TAXES & PERSONNEL

Councilman Beasley said that his committee did not have any meetings in the previous month but did have one scheduled for after the council meeting.

C. BUILDINGS, LAND & PROPERTY

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that the County was working with two prospects.

Mr. Watkins added that the County is working on an open house for EMS some time in March. He said they are working on a final punchlist of things for final completion. He said that employees are using the new part now.

Mr. Watkins said that extensive work has been done at Bishopville High School gym. He said that it has had a complete overhaul and looks very nice.

Mr. Watkins also commented that projects for the City and County in the past 12 months and future 12 months total over \$10 million.

D. PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilperson Caughman not present.

Mr. Watkins said that the fire station in St. Charles was almost finished and will hopefully be active within next few months. He also said that hopefully some other fire stations would be remodeled also within the next year or so.

E. RECREATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Councilman Addison thanked Mr. Watkins for his help in getting upgrades for recreational facilities.

F. WAYS AND MEANS

Councilman Fountain said the County had a great audit and department heads were doing a great job staying within their budget.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Wright was present and said that the person or company the City had to tear down houses left debris and tires in the community. Chairman Windham suggested that he stop by City Hall and talk to Gregg McCutchen.

Mattie Mack said she was pleased about the City/County newsletter.

She said that she was on the Lee County 250 Committee and said that Lee County does not have a heritage museum. She said she is going to apply for a grant to help with renovation of a building for a museum, but the grant would not cover the cost of a building. She asked if the County had any buildings available. Chairman Windham said that the City had purchased some buildings and was working on a master plan and suggested that Ms. Mack contact the City.

Vanessa Jackson, of CareSouth, was present and talked about the services they offer.

Vice-Chairman Eckley asked if they were still doing free covid tests, and she said they were, but were presently running on low on tests.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Watkins said that he was notified by SCDOT about the 341 and 401 four way stop and said that SCDOT would be working on a roundabout there.

Mr. Watkins said that he had been appointed by the Governor to serve on the Northeast Drought Committee.

Mr. Watkins said there was a 250 Committee meeting today at 5:00 and also said that Andrew Hunter would be guest speaker. Chairman Windham said that the state of South Carolina had allocated \$8 million for the entire state to educate the public of the Revolutionary War.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:07 a.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Beasley.

CHAIRMAN

VICE-CHAIRMAN

CLERK TO COUNCIL

MINUTES APPROVED