

**LEE COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 10, 2020
FAMILY COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE**

Members present were Travis Windham, Chairman; Gordon Eckley, Vice-Chairman; Charles A. Beasley, member; Johnette Caughman, member; Jackie Josey, member; Ron Fountain, member. Staff present were Alan Watkins, Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator; Arlene Samuel, Michael Davis. Others present were Carrie Gass, Donna Scott, Charlie McCants, Willie Blyther, Bernard Daniel, Danny Simon, Dr. Wanda Andrews, Family members of Donna Scott, Gee Whetsel, Andrew Moses.

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 said that Councilman Addison was out of town and was not going to be in attendance today.

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 recommended agenda. 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 FEBRUARY 10, 2020

Councilperson Josey made the motion to approve the minutes of February 10, 2020 meeting. Councilperson Caughman seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

RECOGNITION OF DONNA SCOTT FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

Chairman Windham recognized Ms. Scott for her 19 years of service with the County. Several members of the Scott family were in attendance.

Ms. Scott said it had been a joy working with Lee County and appreciated everything the County had done for her.

REQUEST FOR FIRST READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

A. FIVE YEAR UPDATE OF THE LEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Watkins said the County had developed a Comprehensive Plan, which is an analysis of any changes in population and other statistics related to county and growth pattern.

Chairman Windham recommended this matter be referred to the Buildings, Land & Property Committee and said that a Public Hearing would be held.

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

Chairman Windham thanked Santee Lynches for working with the County on this.

B. REVISION OF THE MULTI-COUNTY PARK AGREEMENT WITH DARLINGTON COUNTY

Mr. Watkins said that Lee County was contacted by Darlington County in regards to an economic development project in reference to enlarging their current multi county park. Lee County is included in this multi-county park agreement and would receive 1% of tax revenue generated by this project. Mr. Watkins said this is no cost to the county.

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

REQUEST FOR SECOND READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE

A. UPGRADE OF EXISTING COURTHOUSE PHONE SYSTEM

Mr. Watkins said there have been some changes in the numbers from the first reading. He said that main issue with the current phone system is it does not recognize touch tones. He said that people with Verizon cell phones cannot put in a specific extension. After some comparison of numbers between NEC and Farmers Telephone, the committee recommended to go with Farmers Telephone because we would be dealing with one company and our phone system would be internet based. In going with FTC, it would be less expensive over a 5 year period and

the county will have one provider. He said the projected savings to go with Farmers would be approximately \$17,000 over the next five years.

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Councilman Fountain made the motion to go with Farmers Telephone in reference to the upgrade of the County phone system. Councilperson Caughman 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 the Buildings, Land & Property recommended that County purchase the John Deere because it is cheaper to operate and has a 48 month 0 % interest rate. He said that we should have the equipment by the end of the week. Mr. Watkins said that the County still maintains 120 miles of dirt roads, so this motor grader is a necessity.

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

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that by the County doing a lease purchase, we are getting into a cycle of changing out equipment on a regular basis.

C. PURCHASE OF VARIOUS PUBLIC WORKS EQUIPMENT

Mr. Watkins said the County netted \$67,000 from sale of the motor grader and said the County is taking the money to purchase work truck, trash compactor and upgrade roll off truck. He said that basically three pieces of equipment would be purchased with excess funds.

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

REAPPOINTMENT OF MARY CALDWELL TO THE LEE COUNTY DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS FOR ANOTHER FOUR YEAR TERM, WITH AN EXPIRATION DATE OF JUNE 2024

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve the reappointment of Mary Caldwell to the Lee County Disabilities and Special Needs Board for another four years. 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

Dr. Wanda Andrews gave an update on the school and said they were working with the County on the census.

Chairman Windham thanked her for working with the County on the census.

Councilperson Josey said that she, Alan and Councilperson Caughman attended the Ribbon Cutting for STEM Lab. She said this would give students the tools to move ahead in their career.

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She attended the NAACP Banquet where Rev. Dr. Shawn Johnson, superintendent of Clarendon School District spoke and he did a great job. Chairman Windham was also in attendance.

Ms. Greene, with Clemson Extension, was present and deferred to Ms. Harvey, of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, to talk about the food ministry they are doing. She said that so far it has been a great success.

She said that the cost was \$15 per box and you could order on March 24 and pick up on March 29. She said the produce is very fresh. She said that food stamp recipients could use their healthy bucks to purchase these boxes and would only cost them \$5 per box.

Michael Davis said he purchased one of these boxes and said it was very good and fresh.

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that Lee County is rated #1 in the state for obesity.

Ms. Harvey said that on March 27 at 8:30, they will the produce delivered and volunteers will be there to assemble the boxes for customers. She said the Council was invited to attend.

Councilperson Josey thanked Donna Scott for her years of service and wished her well.

B. PLANNING, TAXES & PERSONNEL

No meetings this month. He did say that he had received calls from citizens on roads from all the rain we have had.

He thanked Donna Scott for her years of service as a county employee and a firefighter.

C. BUILDINGS, LAND & PROPERTY

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that there is roof damage on the E-911 building, and the County is taking bids on it. He said that insurance would be paying for this since it was storm related.

D. PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilperson Caughman said that they had no meetings. She said she got to witness EMS people at work because there was an accident in front of her house, and she said she was impressed with how everyone handled it. She said it was a serious accident and she was proud of county employees and the great job they do.

E. RECREATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Mr. Watkins said everything is going well. He said they finished basketball and baseball is starting up. He said that 100 children had signed up and there would be around 8 or 9 teams.

Mr. Watkins said that senior activities were still going on 2 or 3 days a week. He said the old Bishopville High Gym was open from 8-12 every day for walkers.

F. WAYS AND MEANS

Councilman Fountain said he had no meetings. He said meetings for the new budget will start soon.

G. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Watkins thanked Dr. Andrews and the Complete Count Committee, which consists of various agencies within the County, for their help with the Census. He said the County put 4,000 flyers out at the offices of DHEC, DSS, Council on Aging, Parks and Recreation, grocery stores, pharmacies. He said there is a meeting Thursday with the pastors of the churches in Lee County. There will be two meetings with one at 12:00 and one at 6:00, with meals being served. Mr. Watkins announced there are two locations for assistance for the census, which are the Lee County Library and Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Watkins also said that if anyone had a PO box, a census form would be hand delivered to you for completion.

Mr. Watkins gave an update on the Corona Virus and said that SC had 7 suspected cases. He said that everyone needs to practice washing hands. He said that 80% of people would have mild symptoms if they get it. Mr. Watkins also said that senior citizens and people with underlying health conditions are considered high risk.

Mr. Watkins met with Department Heads and Elected Officials about the Corona virus and has a plan in place.

Mr. Watkins said that he attended the Rural Summit in Clemson and reported that Department of Commerce is working hard for rural South Carolina.

Mr. Watkins they discussed broad band internet access and said that SC Department of Commerce is working on plans to enhance broadband in South Carolina.

Vice-Chairman Eckley reminded everyone about the meeting with the pastors of the churches in Lee County on Thursday at the Chappell Gym. He said this meeting was very important in that the census count meant \$1500 per person and \$15,000 per person over a 10 year period.

Chairman Windham recognized Danny Simon, Michael Davis and Andre Laws.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Pat Carter said the NAACP banquet was a success and thanked the county for their support. She said the speaker was great.

Ms. Carter said she was very concerned about the census and wanted to work with the County to help get the best count possible.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Beasley.

CHAIRMAN

VICE-CHAIRMAN

CLERK TO COUNCIL

MINUTES APPROVED