

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 14, 2020, 9:30 A.M.  
LEE COUNTY COURT HOUSE

“Due to the Corona-COVID 19 crises, the public was not allowed to attend this meeting. The meeting was conducted by phone and was also broadcast live on Face Book: Lee FD Pio and Lee Fire Rescue”.

**OPEN MEETING AND ROLL CALL OF COUNCILMEMBERS**

Chairman Windham was present and asked Mrs. Stokes do to a roll call of all councilmembers, and the following was present by phone: Gordon Eckley, Vice-Chairman; Charles A. Beasley, David Addison, Johnette Caughman, Jackie Josey, Ron Fountain. Staff present were Alan Watkins, Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator/Clerk to Council; Brandon Holloman, Dwayne Huggins.

**FOIA**

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

**WELCOME AND INVOCATION**

Chairman Windham thanked the Council for joining the meeting by phone and Vice-Chairman Eckley gave the invocation.

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED AGENDA**

Councilperson Caughman made the motion to approve the agenda as mailed. Councilman Fountain seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote. Mrs. Stokes asked for each vote individually. Motion carried. All voted in favor.

**MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF MARCH 10, 2020 AND CALLED MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 19 AND MARCH 27, 2020.**

Vice-Chairman Eckley made the motion to approve the minutes from regular meeting of March 10, 2020 and called meeting minutes of March 19 and March 27, 2020. Councilperson Caughman seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and Mrs. Stokes asked for each councilmember’s vote. Motion carried. All voted in favor.

## **REQUEST FOR MOTION ON APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE FOR THIRD READING**

### **A. UPGRADE OF EXISTING COURTHOUSE PHONE SYSTEM**

Mr. Watkins said that the County is replacing the current phone system because we have had issues with the current phone system. The County took bids from FTC, who already provides the phone lines for the phone system.

The County requested a bid from FTC to provide equipment and phone lines and also requested a bid from a third party, NEC.

Mr. Watkins said the equipment with FTC is an internet based system and would cost \$17,000 less than NEC.

Mr. Watkins said that Buildings, Land & Property recommended FTC because it was less expensive over a 5 year period. The County will now have one provider that will handle phone lines and hardware.

Chairman Beasley made the motion to approve the upgrade of the existing courthouse phone system. Councilperson Josey seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and Mrs. Stokes asked for each councilmember's vote. Motion carried and all voted in favor.

### **B. LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT OF MOTOR GRADER FOR PUBLIC WORKS**

Mr. Watkins said that the County keeps two motor graders on hand with lease purchase. He said that one of those lease purchases expired and the County sold it and netted \$65,000 in funds.

He said that the County requested bids on Caterpillar and John Deere. The Buildings, Land & Property recommended going with John Deere at a cost of \$211,475 because the maintenance of the John Deere is less expensive. He said that it will be financed for 48 months at 0% interest. Mr. Watkins said that John Deere is providing a loaner until we can take possession of the new machine.

Councilperson Caughman made the motion to approve the lease purchase agreement of motor grader for public works. Councilman Fountain seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote. Mrs. Stokes asked for each councilmember's vote. Motion carried and all voted in favor.

### **C. PURCHASE OF VARIOUS PUBLIC WORKS EQUIPMENT**

- 1. WORK TRUCK**
- 2. TRASH COMPACTOR**
- 3. MODIFICATION OF ROLL-OFF TRUCK**

Mr. Watkins said the County sold the motor grader and the lease purchase was up with a balance owed of \$86,000. The motor grader was sold for \$150,000 and the County was taking

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the difference of the profits and addressing the equipment needs for Public Works. He said the cost of purchase for these items was \$60,000 under amount of proceeds.

Mr. Watkins said that Buildings, Land & Property reviewed these purchases.

Chairman Windham called for the vote. Mrs. Stokes asked for each councilmember's vote. Motion carried and all voted in favor.

#### **PROCLAMATION OF APRIL AS FAIR HOUSING MONTH**

Chairman Windham asked Mr. Watkins to read the proclamation.

Councilperson Josey made the motion to approve April as Fair Housing Month. Councilperson Caughman seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote. Mrs. Stokes asked for each councilmember's vote. Motion carried and all voted in favor.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT AND UPDATE OF COUNTY RESPONSE TO COVID 19/CORONA VIRUS EMERGENCY**

Mr. Watkins said that as of yesterday, Lee County had 31 cases and three deaths.

He said that Lee County has been designated as a hot spot based on the number of residents. He said that our rate of infection is second highest in the state.

He said the County is continuing to follow CDC and Governor's orders.

Mr. Watkins said the peak for South Carolina is April 28. He said the more we observe the quicker the restricted travel will be over.

He said the Census is still ongoing for several more weeks. He said that 41% of county residents have completed their census.

Councilperson Caughman thanked Alan and the emergency staff for the great job they are doing during this virus crisis.

Chairman Windham said that April 27 is the projected peak and said we are going to have to continue social distancing. He commended the Administrator for the great job he is doing during this crisis.

Mr. Watkins said in regards to the budget, the County normally go through Ways and Means, but with the current level of travel and after speaking with the Ways and Means, the County could very possibly carry the budget over into next year.

Mr. Watkins said the State is doing this with all the uncertainty right now, and there will be a lot of financial impacts on the budget. He said the only change would be the mandated increases, such as pension increase of one percent, but there would not be any changes to the current budget. He also went on to say that the school would not be receiving a tax increase and a letter would be sent to them.

Councilman Fountain said this was a wise decision with all the unknowns we are facing.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 a.m. on a motion made by Councilperson Josey, seconded by Vice-Chairman Eckley.

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CHAIRMAN

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VICE-CHAIRMAN

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CLERK TO COUNCIL

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MINUTES APPROVED