

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 9, 2022
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, Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator/Clerk to Council; Brandon Holloman, Lee Richardson, Tim DuBose, Mike Bedenbaugh. Others present were Gee Whetsel; Shirley and Roy Dixon, Carrie Gass, Linda Butters, George Roberts, Areatha Clark.

FOIA

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

Chairman Windham said that Council needed to add 4A to include a presentation of plaque to Jackie Josey for her service on the Santee Lynches Board of Directors.

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve the agenda with the changes. Vice-Chairman Eckley 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 JULY 12, 2022

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of July 12, 2022 as mailed. Councilman Boyd seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

PRESENTATION OF RETIREMENT PLAQUES TO MIKE BEDENBAUGH AND CHRIS CAPELL

Chairman Windham said that Mike Bedenbaugh had been with the Lee County Fire Department for 20 years and said that he had done a great job. Chairman Windham and Councilperson Caughman presented Mr. Bedenbaugh with the retirement plaque. Mr. Bedenbaugh thanked them and said that he had enjoyed working with the county.

Chairman Windham then said that Chris Capell had been with the County for 20 years and had done a great job for EMS. Tim DuBose, Councilperson Caughman and Chairman Windham presented him with his retirement plaque. Chris Capell thanked them and said that he had enjoyed working with EMS.

PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE TO COUNCILPERSON JOSEY FOR SERVICE ON SANTEE LYNCHES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Windham then said that Councilperson Josey was being presented a plaque for her time of service on the Santee Lynches Council of Government Board of Directors. Chairman Windham and Areatha Clark presented Ms. Josey with her plaque and expressed their appreciation of her service on the Board.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE INSTALLATION AND PURCHASE OF LIGHTING ON US HIGHWAY 15 AND AUTHORIZE THE ADMINISTRATOR TO SIGN ON BEHALF OF LEE COUNTY

Chairman Windham said that over a year ago, this project was discussed and said that it would be similar to Exit 98 in Camden. He said that it will include a sidewalk.

Mr. Watkins said that this is being covered under a TAP grant that was applied for through SCDOT. He said this was approximately \$1 million project and the sidewalk would end at the cemetery on one side to Browntown Road and from there it will be both sides. Mr. Watkins said that it be constructed sometime after the first of the year, and this will only be sidewalk and lighting. He said this will not include on and off ramp lighting, as this is a separate project.

Chairman Windham said that it will be good for economic development. Mr. Watkins said the sidewalk money is state and federal money, not local funds.

PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING AUGUST 14-20 AS SOUTH CAROLINA AVIATION WEEK

Vice-Chairman Eckley read the Proclamation and put it in the form of a motion. Councilperson Josey seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

Chairman Windham said that Lee County Airport was very impressive. George Roberts said that there are 13 air-based aircraft located at the airport. Chairman Windham thanked Mr. Roberts for his involvement with the airport.

Mrs. Linda Butters thanked Council for making her husband, Ray Butters', dream come true. She said he would be proud of the airport today. Vice-Chairman Eckley said that he can remember when Mr. Butters moved here, the runway of the airport was grass and said he appreciated his vision to build an airport here.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE

Councilperson Josey said that the Back to School Bash at Chappell Park was very successful. She said that COVID cases are on the rise again and there was a new virus called the Monkeypox virus and asked Mr. Watkins if he could give some information on it.

Mr. Watkins said there had been an uptick in COVID cases and DHEC gives a monthly update. He said the level of hospitalization is not as great and vaccinations are still encouraged. He said that COVID cases may rise with school starting. He said that no monkeypox cases have been identified in the Pee Dee region but he would continue to monitor .

B. PLANNING, TAXES & PERSONNEL

Councilman Beasley said that his committee did not have any meetings. He said there will be some capital projects with EMS building and courthouse, and coroner's office.

Mr. Watkins said that with EMS building, he had met with architect and they were bidding individual subcontractors and they had received a number of bids. He said work would begin shortly.

He said that the main entrance doors of the courthouse were going to be replaced and the entryway would be moved out to the parking lot. He said that employees would have card entry for side entrance door, which would entail swiping the card to unlock and enter.

Mr. Watkins said with the Coroner's Office, they would be adding storage and a cooler. He said there are currently two bays and four more bays would be added, making it a total of six bays. He said that the County may have to get an outside contractor, due to the fact that the county's maintenance person, is out for health-related reason.

Mr. Watkins said the playground equipment has been ordered and would be delivered in 10-12 weeks.

Chairman Windham commended the Fire Department and Public Works for putting up signs around the county.

Chairman Windham commented that the resurfacing on Main Street is backed up because City has to install pipe before resurfacing. He said that resurfacing between St. Charles Road and Highway 341 would take place and we have been told by SCDOT that it could be completed by December 15.

C. BUILDINGS, LAND & PROPERTY

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that the County was waiting on bids for the tennis courts. He said that two major prospects were interested in the spec building. He said that Lee County was in the final four.

D. PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilperson Caughman said that her committee had no meetings. She said she was so thankful for Chris Capell and Mike Bedenbaugh for the great jobs they have done for the County. She welcomed Brandon Holloman as the new Fire Chief and said he would do a great job for the County.

E. RECREATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Councilman Boyd said that he was still working with Administrator on the parks and the playground equipment. He thanked Mr. Watkins for all of his help.

F. WAYS AND MEANS

Councilman Fountain said that it was a new budget year, and he was still glad to report that the County was able to balance the budget with no tax increase.

G. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Watkins said that the Back to School Bash that was held this past Saturday was a huge success and he thanked the Sheriff's Office and City Police for their assistance. He said there were 2,000-3,000 people in attendance. He also thanked the Fire Department, EMS, Angela Simon and Shannon Reddick.

Chairman Windham recognized Lee Richardson and she reported that the Library Board met last night and she said that they were looking forward to having some new members.

Areatha Clark, of Santee Lynches, thanked the Council for their continued support.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roy Dixon said that he was out in the community and said that "since EMS is here and someone calls to bring up a person, what is the policy of which hospital or where should they go"?

He also said that Council takes an oath of an elected official and said there is concern in some districts. He said there are people in these districts who need housing, who are hurting and he said that the Council needs to pay more attention in their districts instead of just at election time.

He said that the lighting is a good thing that's going up on Highway 15 and asked will cameras be included in the lighting.

Mr. Watkins said that Shared Hope had the groundbreaking of their new facility. He said that they are currently remodeling their facility to support the homeless. He said that everything is ready to for construction to begin and should be completed in 4-6 months.

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Eckley made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:18 a.m. Councilperson Josey seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

CHAIRMAN

VICE-CHAIRMAN

CLERK TO COUNCIL

MINUTES APPROVED