

**LEE COUNTY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
OCTOBER 10, 2023  
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; Johnette Caughman, member; Jackie Josey, member. Councilman Fountain not present. Staff present were Alan Watkins, Administrator; Julie Stokes, Assistant Administrator/Clerk to Council; Danny Simon; Mike Bedenbaugh; Teresa Brown, Michael Davis, Paul Fata. Others present were Carrie Gass, Mattie Mack, Nathaniel Best, Jessica Downing, Douglas Mixon, Gee Whetsel.

**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 written. Councilperson Josey seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

**REQUEST FOR MOTION ON ADOPTION OF SECOND READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE**

**A. LEASE AGREEMENT WITH DUKE ENERGY FOR INSTALLATION OF LIGHTING FOR THE  
ON AND OFF RAMPS AT EXIT 116**

Mr. Watkins said that he met with Duke Energy last week about encroachment permits to allow the installation of 27-30 poles and said the lighting for the on and off ramps will be similar to those on Exit 98 in Camden.

He said that the County will do a lease agreement with Duke Energy which will result in a monthly fee to install. This agreement would state that Duke Energy would own the systems and maintain the lighting. Mr. Watkins said the costs associated with the lighting would be

approximately \$800 per month, and he said these funds would come primarily from accommodations and hospitality taxes.

Mr. Watkins the third reading is scheduled for November.

Chairman Windham said this will help attract business from the interstate.

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

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN DARLINGTON COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, CHESTERFIELD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND LEE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TO ESTABLISH SIREN ACTIVATION AGREEMENT**

Mr. Watkins said that he and Mike Bedenbaugh, retired Fire Chief and now working as Emergency Preparedness Officer, along with Chairman Windham, Councilman Addison, Councilperson Caughman, attended a tour of the HB Robinson Nuclear Plant on September 26. Mr. Watkins said this was a very informative tour and thanked Quinetta Buterbaugh, of Duke Energy, for coordinating the tour.

Mr. Bedenbaugh said with the current notification system, if an emergency comes up, there is a 10- mile radius to the plant. He said they have always had a siren, but now they are adding different things to help notify people in the event of an emergency.

Mr. Bedenbaugh said that now, notifications can come through cell phones and hard land lines.

Councilperson Caughman made the motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Darlington County Emergency Management, Chesterfield Emergency Management and Lee County Emergency Management to establish siren activation agreement. Councilperson Josey seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

**COUNCIL AUTHORIZATION FOR RECREATION DEPARTMENT EXPENDITURES**

Mr. Watkins said that he met with Planning, Taxes & Personnel Committee this past Friday and reviewed proposed expenditures and recommendations for several projects at Chappell Park and the old Bishopville High Campus. A proposal to expand current paved parking at Chappell Park was discussed, proposal capital projects at old Bishopville High Campus, and improvements to Old Bishopville High Football Field Restroom and Concession areas were discussed and committee approved and recommended to Council for approval.

The total for all of these projects was approximately \$225,000. He said that \$200,000 of the total would come from capital penny sales tax and other funds from landfill donations would make up difference.

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Mr. Watkins added that the tennis courts should be done in about three weeks.

Councilperson Caughman made the motion to approve the authorization for Recreation Department Expenditures. Councilman Addison seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

Councilman Addison thanked Mr. Watkins, Angie Simon and Shannon Reddick for the great job they do for Lee County.

### **COUNCIL AUTHORIZATION FOR PURCHASE OF CAMERAS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PUBLIC FACILITIES**

Mr. Watkins said this was approved with GO Bond funds. He said that the County had met with several different camera companies who deal with law enforcement. He said that the County has decided to use three different systems.

Sheriff Simon said that the County was going to use flock cameras, which link cameras together. He said these would be used at intersections and said this is a live camera, with a DVR in it. He said this is a great tool for law enforcement and should bring peace of mind to residents.

Vice-Chairman Eckley made the motion to approve the authorization for purchase of cameras for law enforcement. Councilman Addison seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

### **AUTHORIZATION FOR EXPENDITURE FOR DIGITIZING REGISTER OF DEED RECORDS**

Mr. Watkins said the County has been working on this project for a year and this would take the records and make them digital.

Teresa Brown said they have been able to put records online from 1994 to current and will be able to put records from 1902-1994 online with the exception of mortgages and the mortgages would go back 50 years. All of these records would include plats, deeds and mortgages. The cost of having this onsite scanning service will be \$221,558 and will be paid for with GO Bond.

Councilman Beasley made the motion to approve the authorization for expenditure for digitizing register of deeds records. Vice-Chairman Eckley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

### **REAPPOINTMENT OF MARY LANEY TO THE LEE COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD**

Councilperson Josey made the motion to approve the reappointment of Mary Laney to the Lee County First Steps Board. Councilman Addison 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 did not have a report.

**B. PLANNING, TAXES & PERSONNEL**

Councilman Beasley did not have a report. He said that his committee would be meeting next Thursday at 9:30 a.m.

**C. BUILDINGS, LAND & PROPERTY**

Vice-Chairman Eckley said that things are being finalized on the EMS project. He said that locks will be installed within the next few days.

He also commented that Lee County is working with two prospects.

**D. PUBLIC SAFETY**

Councilperson Caughman had no report.

Sheriff Simon said that he hired seven people in the last few months. He said that three of those people are at the academy and four are already certified.

Sheriff Simon also said that the new vehicles that were ordered are being outfitted now. He said that it's taking about ten months to have a vehicle outfitted.

Mike Bedenbaugh said that the Fire Department will be working in the schools for Fire Prevention Week and the department will be doing a smoke detector blitz soon in different areas of the county.

**E. RECREATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Councilman Addison made the Council aware of an event for the Federation for the Blind on October 14 from 11:30 – 1:00 p.m.

**F. WAYS AND MEANS**

Councilman Fountain not present. Mr. Watkins said the auditors on working on FY 23 audit.

**G. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Watkins did visit HB Robinson Nuclear Plant on September 26 and thanked Duke for their support. He also said that the County executed agreement with YMCA and said that hopefully that meant that we would be moving forward with construction for a new YMCA.

Chairman Windham recognized Mattie Mack as the newest school board member for Lee County School District .

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Carrie Gass asked about records prior to 1902. Teresa Brown responded that they were located in Sumter.

Nathaniel Best said that a few months ago, he promised the Fire Chief that he would get the word out about volunteer opportunities for the Lynchburg Fire Department. He said they were having a Soup Day on Saturday, November 18 from 9:00 – 2:00, located on Highway 341, 76 Corridor. He said the goal is \$5,000 and this will be donated to the Lee County Fire Department.

Mattie Mack referenced work being done at Lee County Recreation Department and Bishopville High School and said if Dennis closes, she wanted to request that the same work be done at Dennis and use for recreation.

Jessica Downing – She expressed concerns with the operations at Lee County Animal Shelter since her termination of her position. She also expressed concerns regarding the new director and staff at the shelter.

Chairman Windham asked Mr. Watkins to briefly address these questions. Mr. Watkins said that all allegations of mistreatment of animals at the shelter have been reviewed and found not to be credible. Mr. Watkins said that he has complete confidence in the current staff and operations at the shelter.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was closed at 10:30 a.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Addison. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

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**CHAIRMAN**

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**VICE-CHAIRMAN**

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**CLERK TO COUNCIL**

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**MINUTES APPROVED**