

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC HEARING  
NOVEMBER 17, 2021, 5:30 P.M.  
MAIN COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

Members present were Travis Windham, Chairman; Gordon Eckley, Vice-Chairman; Alexander Boyd, member; Charles A. Beasley, member; Jackie Josey, member; Johnette Caughman, member.

**FOIA**

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

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

A. PRESENTATION OF 2020 REDISTRICTING BENCHMARK REPORT REGARDING CENSUS DATA IN REFERENCE TO REDISTRICTING COUNCIL DISTRICT LINES FOR 2022 ELECTION

The public hearing was opened at 5:30 p.m. on a motion made by Councilman Beasley, seconded by Vice-Chairman Eckley. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

Mr. Watkins said this was the beginning of the process of redrawing council lines, which is done every ten years. He said the population data is used to calibrate those lines, which equals the number of people in the districts.

He introduced Victor Frontroth, with the SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, who informed council about the requirements for redistricting. He went over consideration for preliminary plan and also reviewed the population statistics, which has decreased 13.9%, i.e. from 19, 220 to 16,351 in population. He also referenced the prison population of 1,254.

John Caughman asked about the deviation of the two districts in relation to the prison.

Mr. Frontroth referenced the population of minority majority numbers in population.

Chairman Windham said that Lee County school board has agreed to follow our district lines but can draw their own lines, if they wish.

Councilman Boyd asked if the number of prisoners was removed from this report.

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Mr. Frontroth said that it was up to Council about the prison but said that he recommended that the prison be pulled out.

Mr. Watkins said that it's recommended to take prison population out to better represent the idea of 1 person 1 vote. If you leave them in, it will not change the lines as much and there would be much less confusion about people's district changes. He said that the Council needed to decide early on about the prison population.

Chairman Windham said this follows census blocks and said there are 978 census blocks involved and you cannot split census blocks.

Mr. Watkins said that tonight is the first step and this is the census data that we have to work with. He said that the County would have at least one more public hearing to discuss. He said this has to be completed before March 16 and really should be completed no later than February meeting. He said that first reading would be in December, second reading and public hearing would be in January and third reading could be seven days after the second reading.

Chairman Windham said that has to be done by March for the new election.

John Caughman asked about the deviations of the information on prison being in and being out.

Councilman Beasley said they needed larger map.

Mr. Watkins said that Stan will work with Fiscals Affairs and will be able to see Council's specific areas. He said the lines will reflect your current district and then it will show the additional numbers. He said the population will be divided by seven and that number cannot deviate more than 5% above or below.

Councilman Boyd asked if this information would be made available to school board.

Chairman Windham said that Council will determine final lines and school board can use their or adopt their own.

Public Comments:

Gee Whetsel asked about the number of prisoners going into each district. Mr. Watkins said that if the prison was not included, an equal number of population would be split between seven districts. Currently, the prison only affects districts three and four because they surround the prison itself.

Councilperson Caughman asked why it would be split between two council districts. Chairman Windham said they were closest to prison. Chairman Windham also said that in 2000 and 2010, prison was included and it was approved by DOJ.

Carrie Gass said there had been a decrease in population and asked what effect that has on drawing lines. Mr. Watkins said that population is divided by seven and that is the number of people in each district.

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The public hearing was closed at 6:08 p.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Boyd.

LEE COUNTY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
NOVEMBER 17, 2021  
MAIN COURT ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF THE COURTHOUSE

**OPEN MEETING, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Chairman Windham opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming. Vice-Chairman Eckley gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**REQUEST FOR MOTION ON ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDED AGENDA**

Councilperson Caughman made the motion to approve the agenda as written. Councilman Beasley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE MASTER AGREEMENT GOVERNING THE SUMTER LEE INDUSTRIAL PARK BY AND BETWEEN LEE COUNTY AND SUMTER COUNTIES**

Mr. Watkins said that this had to do with the FILO agreement for the three solar farms. He said this resolution authorized the County to include these parcels in the Multi-County Park so that Sumter County can receive 1% of the proceeds.

Councilperson Josey made the motion to approve the Resolution. Councilman Beasley seconded the motion. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**A. COUNCIL WILL ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION ON A LEGAL MATTER**

Council entered Executive Session at 6:14 p.m. on a legal matter on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilperson Josey. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

Council came out of Executive Session at 6:38 p.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilman Boyd. Chairman Windham called for the vote, and motion carried. All voted in favor.

Council discussed a legal matter and no votes were taken.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m. on a motion made by Vice-Chairman Eckley, seconded by Councilperson Josey.

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CHAIRMAN

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VICE-CHAIRMAN

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CLERK TO COUNCIL

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MINUTES APPROVED