



**MINUTES**  
**OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
***SPECIAL MEETING / PUBLIC HEARINGS***  
**Thursday, June 11, 2020**

**MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
Mr. John Elliott, Chair Pro Tem, District I  
Mr. Paul Cain, Vice Chair, District III  
Mr. Julian Davis III, Chairman, District IV  
Mr. Glenn Hart, District V  
Mr. Wayne McCall, District II

Oconee County Council met at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, County Administrator Amanda F. Brock, County Attorney David Root, & Katie D. Smith, Clerk to Council present.

**Press:** Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [[www.oconeesc.com/council](http://www.oconeesc.com/council)]. In addition, it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Caitlin Herrington / The Journal & John Lyon / WYFF Channel 4 News.

**Call to Order:**

Mr. Davis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Public Hearings for the Following Ordinances**

**Ordinance 2020-01** “AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR OCONEE COUNTY AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR ORDINARY COUNTY PURPOSES, FOR THE TRI-COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES PROTECTION SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE ROAD MAINTENANCE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE BRIDGE AND CULVERT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE DEBT SERVICE FUND, FOR THE VICTIM SERVICES SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS, FOR THE CAPITAL VEHICLE / EQUIPMENT FUND, ALL IN OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2020 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021.”

Mr. Davis opened the floor for Public Comment.

Minister Paula B. Henderson addressed Council regarding the cartoon that was published in The Journal on June 10, 2020.

Ms. Wanda Shehan addressed Council noting she reiterated everything Ms. Henderson said and noted she

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thought she was signing up for attendance.

Mr. Lee Shehan addressed Council regarding the cartoon that was published in The Journal on June 10, 2020.

Ms. Tinishia Graham addressed Council regarding the cartoon that was published in The Journal on June 10, 2020 and also requested the funds be pulled that is paid to The Journal.

Ms. Msiba Dalton addressed Council regarding the cartoon that was published in The Journal on June 10, 2020 and requested they discontinue their relationship with The Daily Journal, Seneca Journal, Upstate Today and any other subsidiary of this media outlet effective immediately.

Ms. Michelle Gilbert addressed Council regarding the cartoon that was published in The Journal on June 10, 2020 and is in support of defunding The Journal.

No additional citizens spoke at this meeting.

Mr. Davis opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance. No citizen addressed Council.

Mr. Davis asked if any citizens wished to submit written comments regarding this ordinance; no citizen presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2020-01**.

**Ordinance 2020-02** “AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE OPERATIONS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2020 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021.”

Mr. Davis opened the floor for Public Comment.

Mr. Davis noted there was a written comment [copy filed in backup materials] sent in from Ms. Lynne Martin regarding Ordinance 2020-02.

Ms. Mary Ann Grabarczyk addressed Council noting she disagreed with the written statement that was submitted and noted the legislators should be held responsible and find the money.

No additional citizens spoke at this meeting.

Mr. Davis opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance. No citizen addressed Council.

Mr. Davis asked if any citizens wished to submit written comments regarding this ordinance; no citizen

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presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2020-02**.

**Ordinance 2020-03** “AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT AND TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2020 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021.”

Mr. Davis opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council; Mr. Davis opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance. No citizen addressed Council.

Mr. Davis asked if any citizens wished to submit written comments regarding this ordinance; no citizen presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2020-03**.

### **Second Reading of the Following Ordinances**

**Ordinance 2020-01** *[see caption above]*

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, to approve **Ordinance 2020-01** on second reading.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to amend **Ordinance 2020-01** to direct staff to remove all funding from the Seneca Journal or any affiliate of The Journal for services not statutorily required and utilize that funding for the following sources: **[1]** pay a civilian staff position in the Sheriff’s Department to provide cultural diversity training and serve as community liaison for law enforcement in an amount not to exceed \$55,000 per year; **[2]** pay for a trust-building program between the community and law enforcement to be researched by staff; and **[3]** pay for electronic grievance reporting system to be researched by staff.

Lengthy discussion continued to include but not limited to:

- Payments made to The Journal [copy filed with backup materials]
- Research a newspaper of general publication in the County that is most likely to reach citizens within the community
- Advertising funds not go to The Journal unless it is legally required

Ms. Lynette Wright addressed Council and asked for an example of what is legally required by law to advertise.

Mr. Root noted the notices have to be in a newspaper that is a general content that appeals to the general population and has to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the County. He also noted that every third reading on an ordinance is required to have a public notice and also public notices for commissions, such as the Planning Commission hearings or Board of Zoning Appeals hearings. Discussion

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continued.

Ms. Mary Ann Grabarczyk addressed Council and asked if electronically would cover the requirements.

Mr. Root noted there was an Attorney General opinion approximately three years ago that it had to be in a print newspaper.

Mr. Jerry Barnett addressed Council and noted that Mr. Edwards bought the two local newspapers in the County and questioned why he did so.

Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Cain, seconded by Mr. Davis, it was approved 5 – 0, to amend **Ordinance 2020-01** to direct staff to remove all funding from the Seneca Journal or any affiliate of The Journal for services not statutorily required and utilize that funding for the following sources: [1] pay a civilian staff position in the Sheriff's Department to provide cultural diversity training and serve as community liaison for law enforcement in an amount not to exceed \$55,000 per year; [2] pay for a trust-building program between the community and law enforcement to be researched by staff; and [3] pay for electronic grievance reporting system to be researched by staff.

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 5 – 0, to amend **Ordinance 2020-01** to reflect the changes contained in the proposed revised budget ordinance that contains the heading "with proposed amendments consistent with Council's motion to postpone of June 2, 2020," including accompanying exhibits, so that the budget generally reflects the expenditures of the current fiscal year.

Mr. Davis called for the vote of **Ordinance 2020-01** as amended on second reading. The vote passed 5 – 0.

**Adjourn:**

Mr. Hart made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Katie D. Smith  
Clerk to Council

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