



MINUTES

OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

October 19, 2021

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. John Elliott, Chairman, District I
Mr. Paul Cain, Vice Chairman, District III
Mr. Julian Davis III, Chairman Pro Tem, District IV
Mr. Glenn Hart, District V
Mr. Matthew Durham, 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 Brock, County Attorney David Root, and Jennifer C. Adams, 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]. In addition, it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Dick Mangrum / WGOG, Riley Morningstar / The Journal, Fox News

Call to Order

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

Mr. Elliott opened the meeting reminding the public they have two opportunities to speak during Council meetings, which is during the public comment session and also during the public hearing session, if scheduled. Other than those two instances, the public should remain silent during the Council meeting. Anyone making a disturbance during the meeting will be asked to leave Council Chambers for the remainder of the meeting.

Moment of Silence

Mr. Elliott requested a moment of silence prior to the Invocation by County Council Chaplain.

Invocation by County Council Chaplain

Mr. Root, County Council Chaplain, gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Durham led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

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Appointment of Jennifer C. Adams as Clerk to County Council

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 5 – 0, to appoint Jennifer C. Adams as the new Clerk to Council.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 5 – 0, to approve the October 05, 2021 Regular Minutes.

Attorney's Comments

None.

Administrator's Comments

Ms. Brock welcomed everyone who was in attendance for the meeting. Ms. Brock addressed a clerical date error on the agenda with Proclamation 2021-15; the date should read October 20, 2021. The actual proclamation is dated correctly.

Ms. Brock also thanked several departments and Oconee County staff members for their preparation and efforts toward this year's Annual County Property Tax Sale.

Introduction of Voter Registration & Elections Director, Ms. Kristie Burr

Mr. Elliott opened the floor to Ms. Janice Matheson Holbrooks, Registration and Elections Board member, as she introduced Ms. Kristie Burr as the new Voter Registration and Elections Director for Oconee County.

PROCLAMATION 2021-15 A PROCLAMATION DECLARING OCTOBER 21, 2021 AS SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DAY

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to approve **Proclamation 2021-15** on first and final reading.

Ms. Crystal Romanyszyn, Executive Director of the Oconee Chamber of Commerce, received a copy of Proclamation 2021-15.

Public Comment Session

[Limited to a total of forty (40) minutes, four (4) minutes per person]

If you are not able to attend in person and you have a comment, you may submit it by emailing jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or calling 864-718-1023, so that your comment may be read it into the record.

Mr. David Dial extended his thanks to Council for their time and willingness to serve on Council. Mr. Dial asked for patience from Council with Oconee County citizens and their inquiries at Council meetings.

Mr. Perry Smith thanked Council for bringing the Right to Life Resolution back to the table. He also thanked the conservative citizens of Oconee County for urging the elected leaders to stand for the Right to Life. Mr. Smith also thanked Mr. Haney for his hard work relating to transparency with the County budget.

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Mr. Mickey Haney addressed Council concerning the Right to Life Resolution. Mr. Haney also remarked on his request for more transparency in relation to the Oconee County Budget.

Mr. Hayden Laye addressed Council relating to his support of the Right to Life Resolution.

Mr. David McMahan addressed Council relating to his support of the Right to Life Resolution. He also extended thanks to those involved in bringing this Resolution back to Council.

Mr. Steve Halsup spoke to Council on behalf of himself, his wife, and New Hope Baptist Church and the fact that they stand in full support of the Right to Life Resolution.

Ms. Liz Kuemmerer addressed Council regarding her opposition to the last 6 words of the Right to Life Resolution and stated that there “is so much to question in this Resolution.”

Ms. Janie Shipley addressed Council stating that there are many ways to encourage a culture of life, dignity, opportunity for all in Oconee County.

Ms. Theresa Meyerring addressed Council with reference to her hope for the passing of the Right to Life Resolution. She also encouraged citizens to meet with their Council Member outside of Council meeting relating to their concerns. Ms. Meyerring went on to address her opinion on abortion.

Ms. Jody Gaulin address Council concerning her opinion that she believes there is more important business that needs to be taken care of in relation to County Government. She also shared her personal views on Pro-Choice and the Right to Life Resolution.

Council Member Comments

Mr. Durham commented that it was great that so many citizens came out to voice their opinions at tonight’s Council meeting. He also took a moment to recognize Mr. Hayden Laye and his willingness to stand up for what he believes in.

Mr. Hart addressed Mr. Dial and stated he knew what he was feeling because he saw it on the internet.

Mr. Hart spoke to Mr. Smith and stated “total surrender,” regarding Mr. Smith’s earlier comments.

Mr. Hart agreed with Mr. Haney about his issues with the transparency of the County budget and shared his opinion on the matter.

Mr. Hart also spoke directly to Mr. Hayden Laye stating he would like for him to move to District V and be his replacement.

Mr. Hart commended Mr. McMahan on his leadership with the Oconee County Republican Party. He continued, thanking Mr. McMahan and Mr. Durham for showing leadership in Oconee County.

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First & Final Reading of the Following Resolutions

RESOLUTION 2021-10 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING, UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS, THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY BY OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT WITH PROJECT RUBY SLIPPER WITH RESPECT TO AN INDUSTRIAL PROJECT IN THE COUNTY WHEREBY THE PROJECT WOULD BE SUBJECT TO PAYMENT OF CERTAIN FEES IN LIEU OF TAXES, AND WHEREBY PROJECT RUBY SLIPPER WILL BE PROVIDED CERTAIN CREDITS AGAINST FEE PAYMENTS IN REIMBURSEMENT OF INVESTMENT IN RELATED QUALIFIED INFRASTRUCTURE; AND PROVIDING FOR RELATED MATTERS.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 5 – 0, to approve **Resolution 2021-10** on first and final reading.

RESOLUTION 2021-14 A RESOLUTION DECLARING OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA TO BE A RIGHT-TO-LIFE COUNTY, ENCOURAGING A CULTURE OF LIFE, DIGNITY, AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL, AND URGING THE CITIZENS OF OCONEE COUNTY TO PROMOTE THE INALIENABLE RIGHT TO LIFE AND THE INHERENT DIGNITY OF ALL HUMAN BEINGS THROUGH ALL STAGES OF LIFE, FROM PRE-BIRTH TO NATURAL DEATH.

Mr. Durham made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, to approve **Resolution 2021-14**.

Mr. Hart addressed Council concerning the Right to Life Resolution with several questions.

Mr. Durham expressed his thanks to everyone involved in bringing back the Right to Life Resolution.

Resolution 2021-14 unanimously approved, 5 – 0, on the first and final reading.

Presentation and discussion of Redistricting Plan and process by representatives of the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office

Mr. Frank Rainwater [Executive Director] and associates joined the meeting via Zoom. Mr. Rainwater presented updates concerning the Redistricting Plan and process. Mr. Davis noted, for public information, that a copy of the Redistricting Plan has been provided in the backup material on the County website.

Mr. Root thanked Mr. Rainwater and his associates for all of their hard work and help on this project.

RESOLUTION 2021-15 A RESOLUTION ADOPTING REDISTRICTING CRITERIA TO BE USED IN DEVELOPING THE 2020 REDISTRICTING PLAN.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 5 – 0, to approve **Resolution 2021-15**.

Public Comment on Redistricting Plan and Process

Ms. Janie Shipley spoke to Council concerning, what she thinks, is a discrepancy by Mr. Rainwater in his

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presentation. Mr. Root stated that he will further review the issue to be sure no corrections need to be made. Ms. Shipley spoke about several concerns she has with regard to the Redistricting Plan.

Public Hearings for the Following Ordinances

If you would like to be heard during either of the public hearings, please contact Clerk to Council Jennifer C. Adams at jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or 864-718-1023 so that your participation by may be coordinated.

Ordinance 2021-21 EXPENDITURE OF A PORTION OF LOCAL CORONAVIRUS FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDING THAT HAS BEEN ALLOCATED TO OCONEE COUNTY UNDER THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 (“ARPA”), AS FOLLOWS: (1) APPROPRIATING TWO MILLION, FOUR HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOUR THOUSAND, EIGHTY AND 00/100 (\$2,474,080.00) DOLLARS OF COUNTY ARPA FUNDING FOR PURPOSES OF NECESSARY WATER / WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE CITY OF WALHALLA (“WALHALLA WATER / WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT”); (2) AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE, SUBJECT TO CERTAIN TERMS AND CONDITIONS, OF UP TO TWO MILLION, FOUR HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOUR THOUSAND, EIGHTY AND 00/100 (\$2,474,080.00) DOLLARS OF SUCH APPROPRIATED FUNDS FOR THE WALHALLA WATER / WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT; AND (3) OTHER MATTERS DIRECTLY RELATED THERETO.”

As directed by Council on September 7, 2021

Mr. Elliott opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council, Mr. Elliot closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2021-21**.

Third Reading of the Following Ordinances

Ordinance 2021-21 [see caption above]

Mr. Durham made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to approve **Ordinance 2021-21** on 3rd & final reading.

Second Reading of the Following Ordinances

Ordinance 2021-24 AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS, IN ONE OR MORE SERIES, TAX-EXEMPT OR TAXABLE, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$1,500,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACQUIRING, CONSTRUCTING, EQUIPPING, OR REHABILITATING VARIOUS CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THE KEOWEE FIRE TAX DISTRICT; AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO PRESCRIBE THE FORM AND DETAILS OF THE BONDS; PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE BONDS AND THE DISPOSITION OF THE PROCEEDS OF THE BONDS; PROVIDING FOR BORROWING IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF THE BONDS; AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to approve **Ordinance 2021-24** on second

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reading.

First Reading of the Following Ordinance

Ordinance 2021-22 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING (A) THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA (“COUNTY”), AND PROJECT RUBY SLIPPER WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROPERTY IN THE COUNTY, WHEREBY SUCH PROPERTY WILL BE SUBJECT TO CERTAIN PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF CERTAIN SPECIAL SOURCE CREDITS; (B) THE COUNTY TO TRANSFER REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE COUNTY TO PROJECT RUBY SLIPPER; (C) THE COUNTY TO CREATE A MULTI-COUNTY INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK WITH PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, AND DESIGNATE THE PROPERTY TO BE OWNED BY PROJECT RUBY SLIPPER AS MULTI-COUNTY PARK PROPERTY; AND (D) OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to approve **Ordinance 2021-22** on first reading.

Discussion Regarding Action Items

Title: W.K. Dickson Work Authorization # 7

Department(s): Airport

Amount: \$ 278,200.00

(AIP) Project No. 3-45-0016-030-2021

FAA 100% Funded

On November 15, 2016, Council approved the award of RFP 16-07 for Professional Engineer and Consulting Services for the Oconee County Airport to W.K. Dickson & Company, Inc., of Columbia, SC for a five-year term for services as needed. The County Airport now wishes to contract with WK Dickson for Engineering Design and Bid phase services associated with the rehabilitation of existing asphalt runway pavement. The construction work will be bid out separately and WK Dickson will oversee this work.

On August 24, 2021, the County accepted Grant Offer AIP 3-45-0016-030-2021, Rehabilitate Runway 7/25 Design.

W.K. Dickson Work Authorization #7 includes DBE Project Update, Project Development, Engineering Design, permitting, Bid Phase Services, Professional Services for Field Surveys, and Geotechnical Investigations associated with the rehabilitation of existing asphalt runway 7/25.

The FAA is providing 100% funding for the Rehabilitate Runway 7/25 Design Phase.

It is the staff’s recommendation that Council:

- 1. Approve Work Authorization #7 from W.K. Dickson & Co., Inc. for Professional Engineer and Consulting Services for the Airport Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation in the amount of \$278,200.00.**

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2. Authorize the County Administrator to approve and execute any change orders that may occur as long as the grant funding is approved by the FAA.

Mr. Elliot opened by reminding Council and the public that the above-referenced project is 100% funded by the FAA.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain to approve **W.K. Dickson Work Authorization # 7**.

Mr. Hart and Ms. Brock discussed previous work authorizations at the airport, and clarification was given in response to Mr. Hart's inquiries.

W.K. Dickson Work Authorization # 7 approved unanimously.

Mr. Davis departed the Council Meeting.

Discussion regarding County Budgeting and Accounting Detail

Ms. Brock discussed the topic of the County Budget and its transparency to the citizens of Oconee County.

Mr. Hart, Mr. Root, and Ms. Brock discussed the topic of safeguards that are in place relating to the County Budget and how expenditures are authorized and approved.

Council Committee Reports

None scheduled for this meeting.

Board & Commission Appointments

Building Codes Appeal Board

1 At-Large Seat: No questionnaire on file for this seat.

Executive Session:

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 4 – 0 [Mr. Davis absent], to enter into Executive Session for the following purposes, as allowed for in § 30-4-70(a) of the South Carolina Code of Laws:

[1] Discuss an Economic Development matter, Project Queso.

[2] Discuss an Economic Development matter, Project Ruby Slipper

Council entered Executive Session at 7:10 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 7:28 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Cain, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 4 – 0.

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Mr. Elliott stated no action was taken in Executive Session.

Mr. Root asked Council for a motion related to Project Ruby Slipper: “to continue negotiations as discussed.”

Mr. Cain made a motion, Mr. Hart seconded, approved 4 – 0, to continue negotiations as discussed in relation to Project Ruby Slipper.

Adjourn:

Mr. Hart made a motion, approved unanimously (4 - 0), to adjourn at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer C. Adams, Clerk to Council

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