



# MINUTES

## OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Regular Meeting

### April 02, 2024

#### MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. John Elliott, District I  
Mr. Matthew Durham, Chairman, District II  
Mr. Don Mize, Vice Chairman, District III  
Mr. Julian Davis III, District IV  
Mr. Glenn Hart, Chairman Pro Tem, District V

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, & 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](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: Andrea Kelley / The Journal, Dick Mangrum / 101.7 WGOG

#### **Call to Order**

Mr. Durham called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

#### **Moment of Silence**

Mr. Durham asked for a moment of silence prior to the Invocation.

#### **Invocation**

Mr. David Root, County Attorney, gave the invocation.

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

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

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 5 – 0, to approve the March 19, 2024 regular meeting minutes as presented.

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## **Attorney's Comments**

Mr. Root asked Council for a motion to amend the agenda to remove two items from consideration, first reading of **Ordinance 2024-13** Project Cherry and executive session item 3 (three), regarding land acquisition planning related to current and future operations and management of the Oconee County Rock Quarry.

As requested by Mr. Root, Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 5 – 0, to amend the agenda by removing first reading of **Ordinance 2024-13** Project Cherry and executive session item 3 (three) from the agenda.

## **Administrator's Comments**

None for this meeting.

## **Presentation**

*South Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation presentation to the Oconee County Sheriff's Office*

Mr. Chris Watts, Chair of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation Council, presented Sheriff Mike Crenshaw and the Oconee County Law Enforcement center with a Certificate of Accreditation.

*Appalachian Council of Governments - Steve Pelissier / Executive Director*

Mr. Steve Pelissier, Executive Director of the Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG), addressed Council utilizing a handout entitled, "2023 Annual Report" [copy file in backup], and gave a brief overview of Oconee County's return on investment and services provided to the County by ACOG in 2023.

## **Public Comment Session**

*If you are not able to attend in person and you have a comment, you may submit it by contacting our Clerk to Council, Jennifer C. Adams at [jennifercadams@oconeesc.com](mailto:jennifercadams@oconeesc.com) or 864-718-1023, so that she may receive your comment and read it into the record.*

1. Ms. Sharon DeRidder offered Council her opinions related to the proposed housing development on HWY 130, suggested imposing of a moratorium on residential housing developments, and requested updates to County development standards.
2. Mr. Watson Johnson voiced his concerns to Council regarding the proposed housing development on HWY 130. [A copy of Mr. Johnson's full comment filed in backup.]
3. Ms. Debbie Brown addressed Council with her concerns regarding the proposed housing development on HWY 130 and urged controlled growth within the County.
4. Mr. Stanley Gibson, FARM Center Board Chair, addressed Council regarding comments made by Mr. Hart at the March 22, 2024 County Council Budget Workshop related to the award of a grading contract at the FARM Center and provided details to Council regarding the bidding process for this particular project.
5. Ms. Nancy Porter provided an emailed statement [copy filed in backup], that Mr. Durham read into the record, stating her opposition to the proposed housing development on HWY 130.

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## **Council Members Comments**

Mr. Elliott thanked Ms. DeRidder and Ms. Brown for their comments related to the beauty along Rochester Hwy, then went on to address Mr. Watson's concerns related to the proposed development on HWY 130, and extended his thanks to the FARM Center for their contributions to the community and urged Council to investigate citizen concerns before making comments.

Mr. Hart responded to comments provided by Mr. Gibson related to the FARM Center and offered his idea as to how the bid process for projects could be improved.

Mr. Davis responded to Mr. Hart's comments related to the bidding process for County projects, noting he abstained from voting on project approvals that had any familial ties.

Short discussion followed between Mr. Davis and Mr. Hart related to project bidding and award processes, and fact checking before making comments on Council.

**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](mailto:jennifercadams@oconeesc.com) or 864-718-1023 so that your participation by may be coordinated.*

**ORDINANCE 2024-04** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 32 OF THE OCONEE COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, IN CERTAIN LIMITED REGARDS AND PARTICULARS ONLY, REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMERCIAL JUNKYARD ORDINANCE, TO BE ENTITLED "COMMERCIAL JUNKYARDS"; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Durham opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council and no citizen submitted or presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Durham closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2024-04**.

**ORDINANCE 2024-09** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CONVEYANCE OF EASEMENT RIGHTS TO THE OCONEE JOINT REGIONAL SEWER AUTHORITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE AT THE SENACA RAIL PARK; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Durham opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council and no citizen submitted or presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Durham closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2024-09**.

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**ORDINANCE 2024-11** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT ORDINANCE 2023-16, WHICH ESTABLISHED THE BUDGET FOR OCONEE COUNTY AND PROVIDED 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 PARKS, RECREATION, AND TOURISM CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND, FOR THE DEBT SERVICE FUND, FOR THE VICTIM SERVICES SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS, FOR THE CAPITAL VEHICLE / EQUIPMENT FUND, AND FOR THE CREATION OF THE FIRE / EMERGENCY SERVICES CAPITAL VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT FUND, THE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES FUND, AND THE GENERAL ONE TIME CAPITAL FUND, ALL IN OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2023 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2024, IN ORDER TO EFFECT SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Durham opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council and no citizen submitted or presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Durham closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2024-11**.

**ORDINANCE 2024-12** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CONVEYANCE OF EASEMENT RIGHTS TO CENTRAL ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC. FOR THE PURPOSE OF UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE AT THE SENACA RAIL PARK; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Durham opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council and no citizen submitted or presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Durham closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2024-12**.

### **Third Reading of the Following Ordinances**

**ORDINANCE 2024-04** *[see caption above]*

Mr. Mize made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 3 – 1 [Mr. Davis opposed; Mr. Hart recused] [copy of recusal filed in backup], to approve **Ordinance 2024-04** on third and final reading.

**ORDINANCE 2024-09** *[see caption above]*

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 5 - 0, to approve **Ordinance 2024-09** on third and final reading.

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**ORDINANCE 2024-11** [see caption above]

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 - 0, to approve **Ordinance 2024-11** on third and final reading.

**ORDINANCE 2024-12** [see caption above]

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 5 - 0, to approve **Ordinance 2024-12** on third and final reading.

**Second Reading of the Following Ordinances**

None for this meeting.

**First Reading of the Following Ordinances**

~~ORDINANCE 2024-13 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES AND SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDIT AGREEMENT, BY AND BETWEEN OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AND A COMPANY CURRENTLY IDENTIFIED AS PROJECT CHERRY, ACTING FOR ITSELF, ONE OR MORE CURRENT OR FUTURE AFFILIATES, AND OTHER PROJECT COMPANIES (COLLECTIVELY "COMPANY"); PROVIDING FOR A FEE IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES INCENTIVE; PROVIDING FOR A SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDIT; CREATING OR MODIFYING A JOINT COUNTY INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS PARK BETWEEN OCONEE COUNTY AND PICKENS COUNTY SO AS TO DESIGNATE THE PROPERTY OF THE PROJECT AS PART OF SUCH PARK; AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS.~~

**Ordinance 2024-13** was removed from the agenda.

**First & Final Reading for the Following Resolutions**

**RESOLUTION 2024-06** A RESOLUTION CERTIFYING CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY IN OCONEE COUNTY AS AN ABANDONED TEXTILE MILL SITE, INCLUDING PARCELS IDENTIFIED BY TAX MAP NUMBERS 271-01-01-150 AND 271-01-01-166.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve **Resolution 2024-06** on first and final reading.

As requested by Mr. Elliott, Mr. Root provided background information related to **Resolution 2024-06**, noting this resolution is essentially a renewal for the company that is revitalizing an abandoned textile mill site to apply for income tax credits on two specific parcels.

Motion approved 5 – 0.

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**Discussion Regarding Action Items**

**Title: Departmental Fund Transfer**

**Department(s): Rock Quarry**

**Amount: \$125,000.00**

**Budget: \$0.00 Project Cost: \$0.00 Balance: \$0.00**

Due to sales of stone being \$700,000 above estimations for 2023-2024 fiscal year, quarry staff is seeking Council approval to transfer funds totaling \$125,000 into the Maintenance to Equipment line item to purchase additional wear parts.

**The funds for the transfer would come from other line items previously approved in the FY 2023-2024 budget, making this transaction budget-neutral.**

*It is the staff's recommendation that Council approve the transfer of funds previously approved in the FY 2023-2024 budget to the Maintenance to Equipment line item.*

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 5 - 0, to approve the transfer of funds previously approved in the FY2023-2024 budget to the Maintenance to Equipment line item.

**Council Committee Reports**

*Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management / Mr. Davis ..... March 19, 2024*

Mr. Davis provided information outlining discussion held at the March 19, 2024 Real Estate, Facilities and Land Management Committee meeting.

*Planning and Economic Development / Mr. Mize ..... March 19, 2024*

Mr. Mize provided information outlining discussions held at the March 19, 2024 Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting.

*Budget, Finance & Administration / Mr. Elliott ..... March 22, 2024*

Mr. Elliott provided information outlining discussions held at the March 22, 2024 Budget, Finance and Administration Committee meeting.

**Board & Commission Appointments**

**Agriculture Advisory Board**

District IV seat: 1 questionnaire on file for this seat.

No nominations were made by Council for the vacant District IV on the Agriculture Advisory Board.

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## Conservation Bank Board

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

No nominations were made by Council for the vacant At-Large seat on the Conservation Bank Board.

### Executive Session

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 5 – 0, to enter into Executive Sessions for the following purposes, as allowed for § 30-4-70(a) of the South Carolina Code of Laws:

1. *Receive legal advice and discuss litigation related to expenditure of general obligation bond funds.*
2. *Discuss safety equipment and weaponry needs for the Oconee County Sheriff's Office related to upgraded weaponry.*
3. ~~*Discussion regarding land acquisition planning related to current and future operations and management of the Oconee County Rock Quarry.*~~

Executive session item three was removed from the agenda.

Council entered into Executive Session at 6:58 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 7:28 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 5 – 0.

### **Discussion Regarding Action Item**

*Council approval of the purchase of law enforcement officer equipment upgrades as discussed in Executive Session, in an amount not to exceed \$200,000; to approve the trade-in of current firearms; and authorize the County Administrator to execute documents related to this approval.*

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mize, approved 5 – 0, to (1) approve the purchase of law enforcement officer equipment upgrades as discussed in Executive Session, in an amount not to exceed \$200,000, (2) to approve the trade-in of current firearms and (3) authorize the County Administrator to execute documents related to this approval.

### **Adjourn:**

Mr. Hart made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Jennifer C. Adams  
Clerk to Council

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