



MINUTES

LAW ENFORCEMENT, PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE MEETING

July 21, 2020

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Wayne McCall, Chairman, District II
Mr. Julian Davis, District IV
Mr. John Elliott, District I

The Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health & Welfare Committee scheduled at 4:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Committee Members present [Mr. Davis arrived late], County Administrator Amanda F. Brock, County Attorney David Root, and 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]. In addition, it was made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Caitlin Herrington / Daily Journal.

Call to Order

Mr. McCall called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCall, approved 2 – 0 to approve the February 4, 2020 minutes as presented.

Discussion Items

Lengthy discussion followed regarding the topics indicated below, with various opinions expressed, to include but not limited to:

Discussion regarding Magistrate procedures

Mr. McCall noted defendants are being arrested and released from jail by the Magistrate due to the Coronavirus. He requested that a letter be sent to the Legislative Delegation to pass along to the Legislature regarding the release of the defendants.

Sheriff Crenshaw addressed the Committee regarding bond noting that the Magistrate sets the bond and by law, the defendant is entitled to bond unless one of two conditions are proven – [1] defendant is a flight risk or [2] the defendant is a danger to the community. If either one of these conditions are proven to the Magistrate, bond can be denied. A deputy can be at every bond hearing and present circumstances to the judge to argue for ankle monitor, conditions of bond, etc. Since COVID-19, the Magistrates have been under a Supreme Court of South Carolina to release these defendants if not a serious crime. From January 2019 to February 2020, Magistrate set

approximately 50% surety bonds and approximately 50% personal recognizance [PR] bonds. Since March 2020, there have been 900 PR bonds and 443 surety bonds.

The Committee took no action on this matter at this time.

Mr. Davis arrived during this discussion.

Drug Abuse in Oconee County – David McMahan

Mr. McMahan addressed the Committee regarding drug abuse in Oconee County with Sheriff Crenshaw's permission. He noted there is a big concern in the county regarding opioid deaths and a lot of fentanyl and heroin and is effecting people all over the county. He noted the families are the ones that go unseen and he has to tell the families that their loved one have died due to an overdose. He requested that the State Legislatures get tough on this aspect. He further noted that when an individual is addicted and expected to buy an opiate but then find out that this individual has ingested an opiate with fentanyl, the heart will stop in about 15 to 20 minutes and this is considered poison, which there is a poison law. He noted the reason for the presentation was for support from our State Legislatures to revise or introduce legislation that would come up with a plan to get tougher on drug dealers. He requested a support letter be sent to the State Legislatures.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCall, approved 3 – 0, for a support letter be brought to the August 18, 2020 Council meeting for full Council approval to be sent to the State Legislatures regarding drug abuse in Oconee County.

Mr. McMahan addressed the Committee regarding what is going on across our country with the lawlessness that is going on. He further noted that there has been talk about changing, revising, or removing qualified immunity. He noted qualified immunity is the thin shield that law enforcement officers have to protect them as they go out day by day completing their job. He requested a support letter be sent to US Congressman.

Mr. McCall made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 3 – 0, for a support letter be brought to the August 18, 2020 Council meeting for full Council approval to be sent to the US Congressman regarding qualified immunity.

Discussion with Sheriff Crenshaw – legal issues related to law enforcement operations

Sheriff Crenshaw addressed the Committee with a lengthy discussion to include:

- Qualified immunity
- Shortage of staff
- Potentially add personnel to budget this year if funds come in from the State
- Swat team vests are higher grade than regular deputy vest

Ms. Brock noted that when the numbers from the State come in and when we can confirm what the dollars will be for local government fund and state mandated offices that the County operates and requires, there may be a request from several departments for supplemental budget appropriations once the numbers come in for the 2021 budget year.

Discussion regarding food donations to local non-profits by grocers

- Donating food to Lakeview Assisted Living, Our Daily Rest, etc. instead of throwing out
- Corporate policy
- Legal liability
- Once the shelf life has expired, they are required to throw out
- DHEC and inspection

Mr. McCall made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 3 – 0, to direct the County Administrator and/or County Attorney to research to see what efforts can help the local groceries in food donations.

Continued discussion regarding Recycling

This item was not discussed at this meeting.

Oconee County Emergency Manager Chief Scott Krein

Chief Krein addressed the Committee regarding the following topics to include but not limited to:

Air Packs

- Need to be replaced in the 2021-2022 with a completion by 2023
- 837 cylinders and 330 air packs
- DOT has put a 15-year stamp on the new cylinders and are not allowed to be in a vehicle after that point with some exceptions
- Will need to be in a replacement plan

Application for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant [AFG]

- In the process of writing the grant and can be up to \$2million
- At this time, do not know exactly how many will have and how many qualify but are presently going through each air pack
- Allowed to apply for a pack per seat in a vehicle
- Grant is a 10% to 15% match
- Grant support letter

New Fire Engines and Vehicle Replacement Plan

- 6 fire trucks
- Met with vendor and moving forward with lease purchase
- Had a few changes from the plans in that a few items were not correct in the original specifications
- With changes, under budget and were able to correct the fire trucks without an increase in the budget
- Delayed due to COVID-19, but should be delivered in February or March of 2021
- Vehicle Capital Replacement plan
- Potentially receive squad style vehicles with grants this year

Fire Station Upgrades

- Built substations that had a front gravel pad
- Due to excessive rain, there have been constant wash and constant repair of the gravel

- Holly Springs Fire Station is the first substation to repair the pad in front and parking area; department will be paying for out of the funds they receive through the County's amount and through donations; funds were already in the budget from years ago and rolled over
- Next substations will be Whetstone, Corinth-Shiloh, Picket Post, Village Creek
- Once pad of each is completed and cost that incurs throughout, reassess the most need for the other stations that have been built with remainder funds that was left over from those buildings

The Committee took no action on this matter at this time.

Adjourn:

Mr. Davis made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Katie D. Smith
Clerk to Council