



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
Regular Meeting
February 17, 2009

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. Reg Dexter, District V, Council Chairman
Mr. Joel Thrift, District IV, Vice Chairman
Mr. Mario Suarez, District III, Chairman Pro Tem
Mr. George Blanchard District I
Mr. Wayne McCall, District II

Oconee County Council met on Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, County Administrator Dale K. Surrent, Thomas L. Martin County Attorney and Elizabeth G. Hulse, 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.oconeese.com/council]. In addition it was made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Member of the press present: Ray Chandler – Anderson Independent, Peter Kent, WSNW Radio & Carlos Galarza - Daily Journal.

Call to Order:

Mr. Dexter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. Suarez led the pledge of allegiance to the United States Flag.

Minutes:

Mr. Thrift made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchard, approved 4 – 0 that the minutes from the February 3, 2009 regular meeting be adopted as printed. Mr. Suarez abstained.

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thrift, approved 4 – 0 that the minutes from the Council workshop held on February 10, 2009 meeting be adopted as printed. Mr. Suarez abstained.

Public Comment Session:

Ms. Susie Cornelius addressed Council regarding her concerns about the Fee in Lieu of Tax information given at the last meeting, stating that it was incorrect. Ms Cornelius requested that the correct tax rates be published. She provided Council with a handout which will be filed with these minutes regarding taxes for county businesses.

Mr. John Little expressed his positive thoughts about how taxpayer money is being spent to support The American Red Cross and the Spay/Neuter Pet Program.

Mr. C. W. Richards addressed Council in reference to Item #15-1 on the Agenda regarding budget input from Council. Mr. Richards suggested that when looking at the budget that taxpayer problems should be the focus and also take a different approach by looking at revenue and how to fit that into spending.

Extended Public Comment Session: *[None scheduled for this meeting]*

American Red Cross Presentation / Ms. Kathy Rogers

Ms. Kathy Rogers addressed Council asking for financial support so they can continue to services in Oconee County. As part of her presentation Ms. Rogers read highlights of letters of support from affiliates of Oconee County that included Mr. Henry Gordon, former Oconee County Emergency Services Director. A handout was provided to Council [filed with these minutes]. Ms. Rogers stated that they are in need of an additional \$25,000. There was some discussion, Council questioned Ms. Rogers about how that money will be used.

Mr. Suarez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchard, approved 5-0 to authorize \$20,000 from the Council Contingency Account for The American Red Cross.

Mike Crenshaw- Sheriff's Office Animal Shelter Adoption Request

Capt. Mike Crenshaw, Oconee County Sheriff's Department, addressed council asking for \$3,765 to start a program with the Oconee County Animal Shelter that would help indigent & low-income citizens get their pets spayed/neutered and obtain internet service that will assist with adoptions. Three thousand dollars would be designated for the spay/neuter program with 50 pets being treated. Any cost shortfall would be made up by the Humane Society. In 2008 the Shelter had a 68% euthanasia rate for dogs and cats. This decreased in January 2009 to 42%. Capt. Crenshaw provided statistics and information that served as backup of his belief as to why Oconee County is in great need of this program and internet service for adoption assistance.

Mr. Thrift made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 4-1 [Mr. Blanchard opposed] to approve that the Oconee County Animal Shelter be given \$3,765.

Consideration of the following Ordinances:

Ordinance 2009-01:

Mr. Blanchard addressed Mr. Martin, County Attorney asking if any changes needed to be made regarding **Ordinance #2009-01** "AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 2008-017 RELATING TO THE INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK OF OCONEE AND PICKENS COUNTIES SO AS TO ENLARGE THE PARK" [to include the 2nd Amendment of Agreement for Development for Joint Industrial Park]. Mr. Martin stated no changes were needed.

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 4 – 0 [Mr. Thrift left the room temporarily and did not vote] to approve on second reading **Ordinance #2009-01** "AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 2008-017 RELATING TO THE INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK OF OCONEE AND PICKENS COUNTIES SO AS TO ENLARGE THE PARK" [to include the 2nd Amendment of Agreement for Development for Joint Industrial Park].

Ordinance 2009-02:

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 to approve on second reading **Ordinance #2009-02** “AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT BETWEEN OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AND PROJECT US-EV 2008; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, PAYMENT OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAXES”.

Point of Order:

Mr. Martin informed Council that **Ordinance #2009-01 and Ordinance #2009-02** will require a public hearing on the third reading.

Resolutions for Consideration:

Resolution 2009-03:

Mr. Blanchard asked why this resolution is needed. Mr. Surrent replied stating that it was needed so that SENIOR Solutions would be eligible to apply for grants.

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thrift, approved 5-0 to approve on the first and final reading of **Resolution #2009-03** “OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL herewith designates SENIOR Solutions formerly the Anderson-Oconee Council on Aging as an entity in Oconee County to provide transportation to the Elderly.” .

Council Chairman Mr. Dexter- Announcement

Mr. Dexter announced a new format for the PowerPoint presentation that Council provides the public at each meeting. The discussion regarding Agenda Item Summaries will be summarized for each topic item to streamline the process.

Items for Consideration by Council:

PRT / Building Rental Policy / Formal Written Policy

Mr. Dexter made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5-0 to approve the PRT Building Rental Policy as written.

“Reality Check” Funding Approval / \$1,000

Mr. Dexter reminded those present that this program will include 40 Oconee County citizens in a workshop meeting to be held on April 8, 2009. The group will review future development in the Upstate. Mr. Dexter solicited citizens from a cross section of our county to participate in the program. The cost to Oconee County to participate is \$1,000. Discussion followed.

Mr. Thrift made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 4-1 [Mr. Blanchard opposed] to approve “Reality Check” Funding in the amount of \$1,000 to be paid from the Council contingency account.

PRT Commission:

Mr. Dexter asked if Council wished to vote on these issues in one motion. Mr. Blanchard noted that the Walhalla Rec. Department should be addressed separately.

\$900 / Printing 300 waterfall posters

\$5,000 / ATAX funds for Oconee County Tourism Video

Mr. Suarez made a motion seconded by Mr. Blanchard, approved 5-0 to approve \$900 for the printing of 300 waterfall posters and the use of \$5000 from the Local Accommodations Tax fund to assist with the funding of an Oconee County Tourism Video

\$12,500 / Release budgeted funds to the Walhalla Rec. Dept.

Mr. McCall made a motion seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5-0 to approve the release of \$12,500 in budgeted Recreation funds to the Walhalla Recreation Department.

Courthouse ADA Litigation Issues:

Mr. Martin stated that there is ongoing litigation concerning the Courthouse construction and ADA issues. These three issues relate to this ongoing litigation.

Change Order #1 approval / \$47,945.31

Mr. Blanchard made a motion seconded by Mr. Thrift, approved 5-0 to approve Change Order #1 for Love, Thornton, Arnold & Thomason in the amount of \$47,945.31.

Change Order #3 approval / \$48,776.24

Mr. Blanchard made a motion seconded by Mr. Thrift, approved 5-0 to approve Change Order #3 for Ard, Wood, Holcombe & Slate in the amount of \$48,776.24.

Requisition for new Purchase Order [PO] / \$5,000

Mr. Blanchard made a motion seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5-0 to approve the requisition of a new purchase order for Thomas Martin, County Attorney.

Davis & Floyd / Replacement of Jenkins Bridge at Toxaway Creek / \$31,400

Mr. Martin stated that the Agenda Item Summary is appropriate with consideration of the proposed changes.

Mr. Blanchard made a motion seconded by Mr. Thrift, approved 5-0 to approve the Davis & Floyd contract for professional design services related to the replacement of a deficient bridge at North Jenkins Bridge Road in an amount not to exceed \$31,400.

Sheriff's Department / Purchase of (3) 2009 Ford Sedans / \$65,712.00

Mr. McCall made a motion seconded by Mr. Thrift, approved 5-0 to approve the purchase of three 2009 Ford Victoria Sedans from Vic Bailey Ford of Spartanburg in the amount of \$65,712.000 per SC State Contract 4400000369.

Procurement / Off- Road Diesel Fuel Bidding

The Road Department asked Council to authorize continuation of the current procedure related to the purchase of off-road fuel. The staff recommendation is to allow the current procedure of requesting monthly quotes from two local vendors for off-road fuel to continue through December 2009. Mr. Blanchard questioned why "margin" was on the summary report for only one vendor. Procurement Director, Robyn Courtright, addressed Council stating that the margin is broken out by one vendor contacted and that the other vendor includes the "margin" or profit in their freight costs.

Mr. McCall made a motion seconded by Mr. Blanchard, approved 5-0 to approve the continuance of the current procedure used to purchase off-road fuel.

Fire Truck Purchase / \$339,896.00

Mr. Blanchard stated that the purchase of a new Fire Truck has been researched by Fire District 17. Mr. Blanchard states that the purchase would be of much benefit to the Fire District because it is already built, it will save the County money and it meets the needs of the Fire District.

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCall, approved 5-0 to approve the purchase a Pierce Arrow XT Pumper Truck from Spartan Fire & Emergency Apparatus in the amount of \$339,131.00 with pricing per BVB 08-04.

Council Committee Reports:

Budget, Finance & Administration:

In reference to the info packet given to Council at the Workshop Budget meeting by Mr. Surrett, Mr. Blanchard suggested that they use the budget meeting schedule included in the packet.

Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management:

Mr. Suarez announced that he will schedule a meeting in the coming weeks to discuss I3 and the Building Codes Department.

Commission / Board Reports to Council:

Board & Commission Appointments

Resource Advisory Committee Appointment by Chair

Mr. Dexter asked for a motion to confirm his appointment of Mr. Thrift to serve on the Resource Advisory Committee.

Mr. McCall made a motion seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5-0 to appoint Mr. Thrift to the Resource Advisory Committee.

Administrator's Report:

Budget input requested from Council:

Mr. Surrett addressed Council asking for their input regarding the budget. In addition, Mr. Surrett presented Council with a handout with a 2007 County Analysis that broke down the source of income from property taxes.

Assessor Photo/Mapping Project update:

Mr. Surrett provided pictures of the van that is being used in the Assessor Photo/Mapping Project. Mr. Surrett informed Council that project involves taking the latitude and longitude of each address in Oconee County to be used for Emergency Services and also for the validation of Property Tax Records.

Mr. McCall stated his concerns about the signage on the van saying that he has been receiving calls from citizens not being able to recognize the van. Mr. Surrett was asked to make some changes to the van so that wording, signage, etc could be more visible. Discussion about specific changes followed. Mr. Dexter concluded that Council would meet with Mr. Surrett concerning the changes to the van.

Old Business:

No Old Business was discussed at this meeting.

New Business:**Joint workshop with the Infrastructure Advisory Commission:**

Mr. Dexter announced a joint workshop with the Infrastructure Advisory Commission and Council to be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

New Agenda Item Summary Schedule:

Mr. Dexter announced the implementation of a new Agenda Item Summary procedure that will begin with the March 17, 2009 County Council meeting. Council stated that they need additional review time therefore the deadlines for submission of material for an agenda is being backed up approximately one week. The Clerk to Council will provide departments with a calendar which will also be available on the web for viewing. Mr. Dexter also announced that documents related to Agenda Item Summaries will now be posted on the website. Mr. Dexter stated that this new procedure will allow the Council Members as well as the public more time to review the Agenda Item Summaries and documents pertaining to each meeting.

Salem Mayor:

Mr. McCall recognized the Mayor of Salem presence at the County Council meeting and stated that she would like to meet with Mr. Surrett.

Fire Issue:

Mr. McCall stated that he observed a fire truck driver from Station 21 driving recklessly- almost causing an accident. Mr. Surrett stated that he would set up a meeting with the driver to discuss the situation.

Executive Session:

Mr. Thrift made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchard, approved 5 – 0 to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing legal and contractual matters.

Council entered Executive Session at 8:52 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 9:25 p.m. on a motion by Mr. McCall, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved unanimously.

Mr. Dexter stated that no actions will be taken at this meeting regarding matters discussed in Executive Session.

Adjourn:

Mr. Suarez made a motion at 9:26 p.m., seconded by Mr. McCall that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted:

Stacy Crosby
Sr. Administrative Assistant