



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING
June 9, 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. Wayne McCall, District II

Oconee County Council met for a public hearing on four budget ordinances on Tuesday, June 9, 2009 at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members [except Mr. Suarez], Kendra Brown, Interim Administrator, 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.

Members of the press present: Ray Chandler – Anderson Independent, Carlos Galarza - Daily Journal, Ashton Hester – Keowee Courier and Dick Mangrum – WGOG Radio.

Call to Order:

Mr. Dexter noted that the start of the meeting was delayed waiting to have a quorum present. He called the meeting to order at 6:21 p.m.

Public Hearing regarding Ordinances:

- [1] **Ordinance 2009-05** “AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009 BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE FOR OCONEE COUNTY”
- [2] **Ordinance 2009-06** “AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR OCONEE COUNTY AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR ORDINARY COUNTY PURPOSES IN OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2009 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2010.”
- [3] **Ordinance 2009-07** “AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2009 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2010.”
- [4] **Ordinance 2009-08** “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, 2009 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2010.”

Mr. Dexter opened the Public Hearing stating that those who signed up for comment may speak about any or all of the ordinances during their presentations. In addition, Mr. Dexter solicited written comments from any citizens wishing to have their comments made a part of the permanent record.

Mr. Steven Moore addressed Council voicing concerns regarding budget growth, furloughs, the fire departments. In addition, Mr. Moore compared Oconee County's budget to Laurens & Greenwood Counties [similar population and size].

Ms. Susie Cornelius addressed Council utilizing two Powerpoint presentations regarding Workload Indicators & Fire Service and provided two written statements [copies of all documents filed with these minutes]. The statement regarding the \$610,000 payment to the Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority was read into the record by the Clerk to Council upon Ms. Cornelius request.

Mr. C. W. Richard addressed Council voicing concerns regarding staffing levels and asked Council prior to the next budget cycle to review and made necessary adjustments.

Mr. Tom Markovich addressed Council asked that they consider a central purchasing system in order to save the county money on items utilized by all staff such as office supplies, furniture, computer supplies, etc.

Mr. Jay Brown addressed Council voicing concerns about the county's purchasing policies, ISO ratings and outlined possibly incinerating garbage in the future. In addition, Mr. Brown read portions of a written statement [filed with these minutes].

Mr. Richard Hughes addressed Council reading from a statement [filed with these minutes] commending them for their line by line analysis of the budget and that no tax increase will be passed on the county citizens. He noted that Council's furlough of staff equals approximately 1.5% of their annual pay and that Council furlough to themselves equals 4.0% of their pay.

Mr. Dexter opened the floor to any citizen who had not previously signed up to speak.

Mr. Gary Littlefield addressed Council regarding concerns related to the School District of Oconee budget. He addressed cost per student, drop out rates and future funding for the District.

Mr. Dexter opened the floor to any citizen wishing to submit written comments.
No additional written or oral comments were made.

Mr. Dexter closed the public hearing regarding Ordinances 2009-05, 2009-06, 2009-07 and 2009-08.

Adjourn:

Mr. Thrift made a motion which was approved unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth G. Hulse, Clerk to Council