

**MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
Mr. Steven R. Moore, District I Mr. Kenneth E. Johns, Jr., District II  
Rev. William "Bill" Rinehart, District III Mr. Marion E. Lyles, District IV  
Mr. H. Frank Ables, Jr., District V

**MINUTES, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING**

The Oconee County Council met Tuesday, August 10, 2004 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members and the County Attorney present.

**Press:**

- Members of the press notified (via mail): Keowee Courier, Westminster News, Daily Journal, Anderson Independent, WGOG Radio, WYFF TV & WLOS TV.

Members of the press present: Ray Chandler – Daily Journal, Dave Williams – Anderson Independent, Ashton Hester & Dick Mangrum – WGOG Radio.

**Other Organizations Notified:**

- Also notified were the Oconee County Tax Payers Association and the Oconee County Democratic Party.

**Call to Order:**

- Chairman Ables called the meeting to order.

**Invocation:**

- Mr. Rinehart gave the invocation.

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

- Mr. Norton led the pledge of allegiance to the US Flag.

**Minutes:**

- By consensus, Council adopted the minutes of the regular meeting held July 20, 2004 and the special meeting held July 28, 2004.

**Minutes, Oconee County Council Meeting**

**August 10, 2004**

**Infrastructure Master Plan:**

- Mr. Paul Lewis of Goldie & Associates presented the attached transportation portion of the Infrastructure Master Plan to Council. The transportation portion consists of:

- (1) Roads & Highways
- (2) Rails
- (3) Air
- (4) Public Transportation

**Local Option Sales Tax:**

- Mr. Joe Newton, SC Appalachian Council of Governments addressed Council regarding a local option sales tax. Mr. Newton informed Council of the following: (See attached)

**Local Option Sales Tax**

- (1) One percent maximum tax on retail sales
- (2) Requires a referendum of county voters in November
- (3) Minimum 71% to be applied against county and municipal property rollback fund, 29% for general revenue or additional roll back
- (4) Credit / Rollback will apply to city or county property taxes for operations, this will not reduce school taxes

After a brief discussion, Mr. Rinehart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johns, approved 5 – 0 that the question of a local option sales tax be voted on by the citizens in the November election. Further, Mr. Lyles requested that the Referendum Committee evaluate the local option sales tax.

**Courthouse Sound System:**

- After considerable discussion, Mr. Rinehart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 3 – 2 (Mr. Moore & Mr. Ables voting against) that \$4,000 remaining courthouse funds and \$3,000 Clerk of Court funds be used to purchase a sound system for one of the Family Courtrooms.

**Heritage Center:**

- Mr. Rich Underwood addressed Council regarding a park area at the Heritage Museum. Council approved this park area in concept and instructed Mr. Underwood to work the details out with Mr. Hamilton, County Administrator.

**Minutes, Oconee County Council Meeting**

**August 10, 2004**

**Mutual Aid Agreement:**

- Mr. Rinehart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, approved 5 – 0 that the attached mutual aid agreement between Oconee County and Stephens County be adopted.

**DJJ Contract:**

- Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rinehart, approved 5 – 0 that the attached Memorandum of Agreement between Oconee County and the Department of Juvenile Justice be adopted.

**FAA Agreement:**

- Mr. Johns made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 5 – 0 that the attached Memorandum of Agreement Between the Federal Aviation Administration and Oconee County, South Carolina be adopted.

**Fair Play Ball Field:**

- Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rinehart, approved 5 – 0 that the County Road Department be allowed to level the ball field at Fair Play.

**Westminster Middle Gym:**

- Mr. Hamilton informed Council that Senator Alexander had assured him that consideration will be given to a PARD Grant for the purpose of installing an air conditioner in the gym at Westminster Middle School.

**Ordinance 2004-18:**

- Mr. Johns made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 5 – 0 that Ordinance 2004-18, "AN ORDINANCE TO ABOLISH THE OFFICE OF TAX COLLECTOR FOR OCONEE COUNTY AND TO DEVOLVE THE POWERS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FORMERLY EXERCISED BY THE OFFICE OF TAX COLLECTOR FOR OCONEE COUNTY UPON THE DELINQUENT TAX DIVISION, A DIVISION OF THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT FOR OCONEE COUNTY AMENDING ORDINANCE 2003-25" be adopted on first reading.

**Minutes, Oconee County Council Meeting**

**August 10, 2004**

**Ordinance 2004-17:**

- Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rinehart, approved 4 – 1 (Mr. Moore voting against) that Ordinance 2004-17, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, AUTHORIZING A LEASE/PURCHASE AGREEMENT, SERIES 2004 RELATING TO THE FINANCING OF VARIOUS 911 EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT FOR MUNICIPAL PURPOSES AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS DOCUMENTS INCLUDING THE LEASE AGREEMENT; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO" be adopted on second reading.

**Option on Land:**

- To Mr. Moore's inquiry regarding the option Oconee County has taken on the acreage in the southern part of the county, Council informed those present that all Council Members were present when this was discussed in executive session, Council agreed on a maximum amount to be offered per acre on the tract on land. Jim Alexander, Economic Development Director and Brad Norton, County Attorney represented the County in the negotiations with the property owners. It has not been discussed in open session at this time as no vote as been taken to exercise the option.

**Personnel & Intergovernmental Committee Recommendation:**

- Upon recommendation of the Personnel & Intergovernmental Committee Council voted unanimously to interview Mr. Edward Sealover, Mr. Mark Eckert & Mr. Ronald Rabun as administrator for the county.

**Department of Transportation Agreement:**

- Mr. Norton, County Attorney presented a draft agreement between Oconee County and the Department of Transportation regarding their taking over the sewer disposal of the Welcome Center.

**Solid Waste Commission:**

- Mr. Johns made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, approved 5 – 0 that Mr. Dennis Pearson's resignation from the Solid Waste Commission be adopted and Mr. James Moore be appointed to represent District II.

**Minutes, Oconee County Council Meeting**

**August 10, 2004**

**Rural Fire Commission:**

- Upon recommendation of Mr. Rinehart, Council voted unanimously to represent the following members to the Rural Fire Commission:

- Mr. Jesse Neville representing stations 5, 14 & 16
- Mr. Walter Lee representing stations 3, 7 & 12
- Mr. Tim Grant representing stations 1, 6 & Haz Mat
- Mr. Ralph Manee representing stations 8, 13 & 15
- Mr. Les McMahan representing stations 2, 11 & 17
- Mr. C. G. Phillips representing stations 4, 9 & 10

**Public Comment Session:**

- Mr. Larry Linson addressed Council regarding the Infrastructure Master Plan urging Council to trust, but verify.

Mr. Steve Sokol addressed Council regarding planning and tourism in the County.

Mr. B. J. Littleton addressed Council regarding the proposed one percent sales tax and the sound system at the courthouse.

**Executive Session:**

- Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johns, approved 5 – 0 that Council go into executive session for the purpose of discussing the Tri County Regional Landfill suit, the Oscar Raines suite and the Carl Hayden suit.

**Open Session:**

- There was no action taken when open session resumed.

**Adjourn:**

- Adjourn: 9:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted:

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Opal O. Green  
Clerk to Council