

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. Steven R. Moore, District I Mr. Thomas S. Crumpton, Jr., District II
Rev. William S. "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, February 21, 2006 at 7:00 pm in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members except Mr. Rinehart present. County Administrator Ron Rabun, Clerk to Council & Mr. Norton, County Attorney were also present.

Press:

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

Members of the press present: Dick Mangrum – WGOG Radio, Aston Hester – Keowee Courier & Brett McLaughlin – Daily Journal.

Other Organizations Notified:

Also notified were the Oconee County Tax Payers Association, Citizens for Recreation Center and the Oconee County Democratic Party.

Call to Order:

Chairman Ables called the meeting to order.

Invocation:

Mr. Crumpton gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance:

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

Minutes:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 0 that the minutes of the February 7, 2006 meeting be adopted as printed.

Ordinance 2006-03:

Dr. Valerie Truesdale, Superintendent of Education, presented the attached letter to Council requesting the School District's portion of the 2003, 2004 & 2005 Duke Power taxes which has just been paid due to an error in the calculation.

After a brief discussion Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 0 that Ordinance 2006-03, "THE 2005-06 OCONEE COUNTY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE" allowing for the disbursement of these funds be adopted on first reading in title only.

Statement Regarding "Moratorium":

Mr. Ables read the following statement to those present:

For all those who may be in attendance tonight and who may wonder what is the latest with the concept of a building moratorium on our Oconee Lakes, there is no agenda item on that subject for tonight's meeting.

Because of likely litigation, and the cost of a court defense on this issue, the County has obtained outside legal counsel to carefully advise the Council on the subject of the moratorium. This legal work is ongoing and the Council is not yet ready to take any final action.

We have, however, been advised that if a moratorium is to be properly implemented, it must first be referred to the County Planning Commission. Then, upon their recommendation, the Council would have to conduct three readings of an Ordinance (not a resolution) and must conduct at least one public hearing.

Hopefully, the Council will be in a position to take action sometime during the month of March. The next regular action meeting of Council is March 21, 2006.

The Council remains committed to instituting balanced zoning and land use regulations that will protect our lakes as valuable ecological resources as well as the entire County, and will also protect the rights of property owners.

Public Comment Session:

Ms. Susie Cornelius presented the attached Freedom of Information request regarding the Ordinance approving the extension of time of the investment period under the existing fee-in-lieu agreement between Tyco Healthcare Group, L.P. and Oconee County.

Public Comment Session Continued:

Mr. Andy White addressed Council regarding planning and zoning in the County. Mr. White presented the attached petitions in opposition to high-rise, high-density development to Council.

Ms. Annabell Christenson addressed Council regarding planning in the County.

Mr. Berry Nichols addressed Council regarding a security boundary around Lake Keowee and Lake Jocassee.

Mr. George Cleveland addressed Council disagreeing with the concept of adding onto the present building housing the Seneca Library urging that something be constructed that will accommodate the public for the next fifteen to twenty years. Mr. Cleveland also urged that anyone who wanted to discuss a concern with Council call the Clerk to put them in touch with their Council Member. Mr. Cleveland complimented Mr. Rabun and Council on the efforts they put forth to assist the citizens of Oconee County.

Mr. B. J. Littleton addressed Council regarding the lake areas.

Resolution 2006-05:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that Resolution 2006-05, “A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MARTHA L. WRIGHT” upon her retirement be adopted on first and final reading. Mr. Ables & Mr. Rabun presented the resolution to Ms. Wright.

Resolution 2006-07:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 0 that Resolution 2006-07, “A RESOLUTION IN OBSERVANCE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH” be adopted on first and final reading.

Human Resources Awards:

Mr. Rabun presented the South Carolina Association of Counties “Outstanding Safety Achievement” award to the Human Resources Department and the South Carolina Association of Counties “Horizon Award” to Sheila Wald, Risk Manager for showing improvement and commitment in the risk management program.

Ordinance 2006-01:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that Ordinance 2006-01, “AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY TAX COMMITTEE WHICH IS COMPRISED OF THE COUNTY AUDITOR, TREASURER AND ASSESSOR TO REVIEW AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON AGRICULTURAL AND RESIDENTIAL 4% APPLICATIONS FILED AFTER THE STATUTORY DEADLINE” be adopted on first reading.

Ordinance 2006-02:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 0 that Ordinance 2006-02, “AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AN EXTENSION OF TIME OF THE INVESTMENT PERIOD UNDER THE EXISTING FEE-IN-LIEU OF TAXES ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN TYCO HEALTHCARE L.P. AND OCONEE COUNTY” be adopted on first reading with the stipulation that there be a meeting between himself, the County Administrator and the County Attorney to determine that all questions and concerns are appropriately addressed.

Coroner (Contingency):

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that \$20,000 be taken from contingency and placed in the Coroner’s professional line item for the purpose of performing autopsies, lab work, transportation fees, etc.

Sheriff (Lakeshore Patrol):

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that the attached agreement between the Corps of Engineers & Oconee County for Lakeshore Patrol on Lake Hartwell during the spring through the early fall months be adopted.

PRT Rec Funds:

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 0 that \$5,350 recreational funds in line item 010 202 30905 be appropriated to the Fair Oak Youth Center.

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 0 that \$2,500 recreational funds in line item 010 202 30902 be appropriated to the Walhalla Recreation Department.

PRT Rec Funds Continued:

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, approved 4 – 0 that \$2,500 recreational fund from line item number 010 202 30904 be appropriated to the Westminster Recreation Department.

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that \$2,500 recreational funds from line item number 010 202 30901 be appropriated to the Tamassee-Salem Recreation Corporation.

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that \$2,500 recreational funds from line item 010 202 30903 be appropriated to the Seneca Recreation Department.

Emergency Management:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, approved 4 – 0 that the County accept a Local Emergency Planning Performance Grant in the amount of \$48,365. A total of \$27,085 of this grant will assist in salaries of the Emergency Management staff and the remainder will go toward the purchase of equipment.

Rural Fire:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that the County accept a Federal Emergency Management Agency grant in the amount of \$24,638 with a local match of \$1,297 for the Long Creek Fire Station. The local match is already budgeted in line item 013 102 91076 00000. These funds will enable the Long Creek Fire Station to replace protective clothing, supplies and other equipment.

Parks, Recreation & Tourism:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that the County accept a PARD Grant in the amount of \$5,100 with a local match of \$1,020 (budgeted) for new swing structures at High Falls County Park.

A few weeks ago Council voted to apply for Water Recreation Resources Funds through the Delegation in the amount of \$99,240 to improve the boat docks at South Cove and High Falls Parks. Upon recommendation of the Delegation Members, Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, approved 4 – 0 that remaining PARD Grant funds be used for handicapped access sidewalks at the parks. This will require a twenty percent match, PRT has approximately \$5,000 available to use as these matching funds.

Rural Fire:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that the Rural Fire Department be permitted to transfer insurance and maintenance from a 1976 Dodge ¾ ton 4X4 brush truck VIN W24BE65260357 leased from the SC Forestry Commission to a 1990 Dodge pickup truck VIN 1B7KM26Z6LS701729 titled to Oconee County and located at Keowee Ebenezer Fire Department.

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that the Rural Fire Department be permitted to transfer insurance, replacement batteries and tires (as needed) from a 1977 Dodge VIN W24BE7S185939 leased from the SC Forestry Commission to a 1985 Dodge 4X4 D150 truck VIN 1B78W14T1FSS89035 leased (at no cost to County) from the SC Forestry Commission.

Commission/Board Appointments:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that the following Planning Commission Members be reappointed:

- William Nelson District I
- Randy Abbott District II
- Bill Evatt District III
- Ryan Honea District V
- Alexander Ramsay At Large

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 3 – 0 (Mr. Moore abstaining due to Howard Moore being his brother) that Howard Moore be reappointed as an at large member of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that the following members be appointed to the Pendleton District Workforce Board:

- Joyce Smith One-Stop Partner
- Andrew Tunstall Private Sector
- James W. Alexander Oconee County Economic Development

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 0 that the following members be reappointed to the Sewer Commission:

- Jerry Opperman At Large
- Scott Parris Walhalla Representative
- Mendall Stone At Large

Board/Commission Appointments Continued:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 0 that Jess Neville be appointed to represent Stations 6, 15 & 14 on the Rural Fire Commission.

Committee Reports:

Mr. Crumpton reported that the Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health & Welfare Committee met Thursday, February 16, 2006 and received some valuable information regarding EMS from Mr. Wayne Garland, but there was no recommended action.

Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management Recommendation:

Mr. Lyles informed Council it that was the recommendation of the Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management Committee that up to \$10,000 be approved for a feasibility study for the renovation of the existing Seneca Library. The cost for the feasibility study is \$5,000 and the cost of the topography of the present site is \$1,200. The study, as proposed, would make it site specific to the existing Seneca Library location. The vote was 2 – 2 with Mr. Lyles & Mr. Crumpton voting for / Mr. Moore & Mr. Ables voting against.

After discussion in which members of the Committee indicated they thought it was appropriate to honor the wishes of the Library Board in having a feasibility study of the present Seneca Library site which will identify if the present site is suitable for the Library, Mr. Moore made a motion that the County move forward with Trehel conducting a site specific feasibility study and Goldie preparing the topography of the present site with the stipulation that this study specifically address whether the present location is a good site for the Seneca Library to include the following:

- Site Feasibility Study
- Evaluate the structural and design feasibility of renovating and adding to the existing Seneca Branch Library
- Develop a program and schematic floor plan for a new library building with options on multistory structures
- Determine how best to maximize the proposed site with regards to future growth, etc.
- Prepare initial construction budgets for each option to be used as a guideline to project approval by County Council
- Topography of the present site

Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management Recommendation Continued:

Further, a part of Mr. Moore's motion was that the bid procedure be waived due to time being of the essence and the Capital Projects Sales Tax Commission imposing a deadline of April 15, 2006 for projects to be submitted to them for consideration of placement on the November referendum.

After further discussion in which Mr. John Adams, Library Board Member, assured Council that should the feasibility study determine the present site unsuitable for future growth it did not rule out the potential of other sites, Mr. Ables seconded the motion. The motion was then adopted 4 – 0.

The Library Board was urged to expedite the study to meet the April 15, 2006 deadline.

County Administrator Report:

Mr. Rabun informed Council he would be attending an Economic Development workshop in Charlestown on Thursday and Friday (2/23/06 & 2/24/06), the grand opening of the Chau Ram Bridge would be March 1, 2006 at noon and he along with Council Members Mr. Moore & Mr. Ables would be meeting at Keowee Key on Wednesday, February 22, 2006 at 4:00 pm.

Aeronautics:

Mr. Lyles requested that a study be conducted to determine what the difference in revenue would be if the ratio on aircraft registered in the County was lowered from ten percent to six percent.

Communications:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, approved 4 – 0 that cell towers for the Sheriff's Department and Rural Fire as well as the "rip & run" sheets for Rural Fire be expedited.

Adjourn:

Adjourn: 8:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Opal O. Green, Clerk to Council