

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. George C. Blanchard, District I Mr. Thomas S. Crumpton, Jr., District II
Mr. Mario Suarez, 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 6, 2007 at 3:00 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, WSPA TV & WSNW Radio.

Members of the press present: Kisha Foster – WYFF TV, Dick Mangrum – WGOG Radio, Brett McLaughlin – Daily Journal, Ashton Hester – Keowee Courier & Ron Barnett – Greenville News.

Other Organizations Notified:

Also notified were the Oconee County Tax Payers Association & Citizens for Recreation Center.

Call to Order:

Chairman Lyles called the meeting to order.

Executive Session:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchard, approved 5 – 0 that Council go into executive session to discuss the prayer issue.

Open Session:

When open session resumed Mr. Suarez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchard, approved 4 – 1 (Mr. Ables voting against) that after the Council Meeting is called to order a moment of silence be observed.

Minutes:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 4 – 0 (Mr. Blanchard abstaining due to his not being present at the January 16th meeting) that the minutes of the January 16, 2007 meeting be adopted as presented.

Public Comment Session:

Ms. Susie Cornelius addressed Council regarding the assessments provided by the State for Duke Energy.

Mr. Frank Kieninger addressed Council regarding the prayer issue.

Mr. C. W. Richards addressed Council regarding the search for a new administrator.

Mr. Bill Graham addressed Council regarding Friends of Lake Keowee's opposition to the "takings" bill and presented Council with the attached resolution.

Mr. Roger Norwood addressed Council regarding the prayer issue.

Rev. Ralph Stutzman addressed Council regarding the prayer issue.

Ms. Linda Lovely addressed Council regarding the proposed agreement with Marick Home Builders.

Mr. George Cleveland addressed Council regarding the prayer issue.

Ms. Marly Ellenburg addressed Council regarding the prayer issue.

Mr. Larry Crain addressed Council regarding the prayer issue and the influence all people have on those they come in contact with.

Mr. Michael Deanhardt addressed Council expressing feelings against Christian religion and Christian prayers.

Ms. Barbara Cooper urged Council to keep the verbal prayer.

Rev. Mark Bagwell addressed Council expressing concerns that this was a sad day in Oconee County when Council voted to do away with the opening prayer.

Mr. Mike Johnson, Alliance Defense Fund informed Council their organization would have defended the County free had Council adopted their proposed prayer policy.

Mr. Devoe Blackston addressed Council regarding the prayer issue.

Mr. B. J. Littleton addressed Council regarding the "takings" bill.

Public Hearing RE: Ordinance 2007-01:

At this time Council conducted a public hearing to receive written and/or oral comments regarding proposed Ordinance 2007-01, "AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF A NOT EXCEEDING ONE MILLION TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLAR (\$1,200,000) OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND (KEOWEE TAX DISTRICT PROJECT), SERIES 2007; TO PRESCRIBE THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE PROCEEDS SHALL BE EXPENDED; TO PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT THEREOF; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO".

In response to an inquiry from a citizen, Mr. Norton, County Attorney, explained that this ordinance did not affect anyone except the citizens living in the Keowee Fire District.

There was no other written and/or oral comments regarding this ordinance.

Arts & Historical Commission:

Mrs. Louise Bell, Arts & Historical Commission, presented an award to Mr. Nick Gambrell, former Arts & Historical Commission member.

Road Department (Contingency):

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that the bid process be waived and a used bucket truck for the Road Department be purchased from Trueco, Inc. at a cost of \$63,500 and necessary implements for the bucket truck be purchased from Ditch Witch of the Carolinas at a cost of \$3,500 with funding coming from the following sources: Roads & Bridges - \$56,000; Economic Development - \$1,000 and Contingency - \$10,000. (See attached)

Solid Waste:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 5 – 0 that the bid process be waived and three cardboard compactors and three containers be purchased from Bakers Waste Equipment of Greenville SC at a cost of \$51,600. (See attached)

Emergency Management:

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that Emergency Management be authorized to apply for a Community Emergency Response Team grant in the amount of \$7,000. If received, this grant requires no local match.

Oconee County Board of Disabilities (Contingency):

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that the County donate sixty (60) tons of crusher run gravel to the Oconee County Board of Disabilities (Tribble Center) with the cost of \$410 coming from contingency. (See attached request)

Treasurer's Office (Contingency):

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchard, approved 5 – 0 that temporary help in the Treasurer's Office be extended through March 2007 with the \$1,700 cost coming from contingency.

Ordinance 2007-01:

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that Ordinance 2007-01, "AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A NOT EXCEEDING ONE MILLION TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLAR (\$1,200,000) OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND (KEOWEE FIRE TAX DISTRICT PROJECT), SERIES 2007; TO PRESCRIBE THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE PROCEEDS SHALL BE EXPENDED; TO PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT THEREOF; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO" be adopted on third and final reading.

Resolution 2007-01:

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that Resolution 2007-01, "A RESOLUTION IN OBSERVANCE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH" be adopted on first and final reading.

Council Committee Reports:

Mr. Crumpton reported that the Road & Transportation Committee had met at 2:00 pm just prior to the Council Meeting, but there was no recommended action as it was an information only meeting.

Bridge Beams:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 5 – 0 that four 27" X 54' bridge beams (unusable by the County Roads & Bridges Department) be donated to the City of Walhalla. (See attached request)

Proposed DSS Building:

Mr. Hendricks updated Council on the progress of the proposed Department of Social Services Building and presented a proposed floor plan to be finished at approximately \$78 per square foot.

Request for Pews:

The attached request for pews from the old courthouse for the old St. John's Episcopal Church was referred to the Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management Committee. Mr. Lyles scheduled a meeting Tuesday, February 20, 2007 at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers to discuss this request.

Treasurer (Contingency):

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 that \$3,000 be taken from contingency for overtime in the Treasurer's Office due to a heavy workload. (See attached request)

Council Work Session:

Mr. Lyles scheduled a work session of Council Monday, February 12, 2007 at 10:00 am in Council Chambers for the purpose of discussing reassessment.

Opposition to "Takings" Bill:

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 5 – 0 that Council send the Legislative Delegation a letter in opposition to the "Takings" or "Bad Neighbor" bill.

Planning Department:

Mr. Blanchard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 5 – 0 that the Planning Department be directed to develop the process and procedures for variances. This process is to include public notification of such a hearing and then afford public comment before any action is taken.

Executive Session:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 5 – 0 that Council go into executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter (boards & commissions).

Minutes, Oconee County Council Meeting

February 6, 2007

Open Session:

When open session resumed, no action was taken.

County Administrator:

Mr. Hendricks informed Council that fifteen resumes and applications had been received for County Administrator.

Adjourn:

Adjourn: 5:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted:

Opal O. Green
Clerk to Council