



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
Regular Meeting
January 29, 2008

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. George Blanchard District I, Chairman

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

Oconee County Council met on Tuesday, January 8, 2008 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, County Administrator Dale K. Surrett, Elizabeth G. Hulse, Clerk to Council & Mr. Bradley A. Norton, 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.

Member of the press present: Carlos Garza-Daily Journal, David Williams-Anderson Independent and Dick Mangrum-WGOG Radio.

Call to Order:

Chairman Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

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

Minutes:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 5 – 0 that the minutes from the January 8, 2008 meeting be adopted as printed.

Executive Session:

Mr. Blanchard asked for a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter.

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approve 5 – 0 to move into executive session for the reason stated above.

Council entered into executive session at 6:02 p.m.

Council returned from executive session at 6:23 p.m.

Mr. Blanchard recognized Mr. Surrett who addressed Council regarding the personnel matter discussed. Mr. Surrett noted that there is a potential conflict between state law and the laws governing the Council/Administrator form of government. State law requires that Council review and approve the hiring of appointed officials. The Council/Administrator form of government allows the Administrator to hire without Council approval. To avoid any possible concern, Mr. Surrett asked Council to confirm his appointment of Ms. Anna Davison as the Register of Deeds. He noted that Ms. Davison has 10+ years experience in the department.

Mr. Suarez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 5 – 0 to appoint Ms. Anna Davison as the Register of Deeds.

Council along with Mr. Surrett thanked Ms. Peggy Westmoreland for her work during the interim Register of Deeds.

Public Comment Session:

Mr. George Booth addressed Council regarding his support for the Zoning Enabling Ordinance.

Mr. Steve MacLeod addressed Council regarding his support for the Zoning Enabling Ordinance to ensure the quality of life in Oconee County.

Ms. Linda Lovely addressed Council regarding her support for the Zoning Enabling Ordinance but voiced concerns that the overlay for the lakes be maintained to protect the area from high density development.

Mr. Jack Dudley addressed Council regarding his support for the Zoning Enabling Ordinance.

Ms. Susie Cornelius addressed Council regarding two issues; [1] providing funds in the 2008-2009 Planning Department budget to allow for advertising of Planning Commission meetings, and [2] concern that the Zoning Enabling Ordinance is not following the fire districts which may cause confusion.

Mr. Bill Jones addressed Council regarding his concerns about a buffer zone as outlined in the Zoning Enabling Ordinance and his opposition to any zoning in Oconee County.

Mr. B. J. Littleton addressed Council regarding his concerns about loss of freedom in Oconee County.

Items for Consideration by Council:

IT: Agreement: Technologies Solutions [web-based payment portal]:

IT: Agreement: NPC/COCARD [card present account]:

IT: Agreement: NPC/COCARD [card not present account]:

IT: Agreement: NPC/COCARD [internet account]:

Chairman Blanchard noted that these issues had been before Council in December 2007 at which time concerns arose regarding the process and the way in which this information was presented to Council. Mr. Blanchard asked Mr. Gregory Nowell, Treasurer, to step forward and address Council.

Questions arose regarding the need to have an outside company develop a website for credit card processing for the Treasurer's office instead of utilizing staff in the county's IT Department. Mr. Nowell stated that the IT Department was not capable of developing and sufficiently maintaining a website of this complexity. He stated that he had sent out and received three bids for the website and that they were provided to the Procurement Department. Mr. Blanchard stated that the bids were not presented to Council for review. Mr. Lyles questioned if the vendor presented was low bid. Mr. Nowell stated that he didn't know why the bids had not been presented to Council and noted that the vendor selected was not low bid but would over time ultimately cost less to the County.

Fees for each credit card use were also discussed. Mr. Nowell noted that presently our bank, Community First, was waiving the fees for in person and telephone transactions. In addition, he noted that any fees for internet transactions would be passed onto the customer and that any fees would be clearly stated prior to completion of the transaction and they could opt out of paying by this method if they wished to avoid a fee. Mr. Blanchard asked if there were any contracts in place regarding these fees and Mr. Nowell stated that there were none.

Security for internet transactions was discussed. Mr. Blanchard noted that Council had previously voiced concerns that the web designed did not adequately address concerns regarding security of personal information for the citizens.

Mr. Blanchard tabled further discussion of this matter and stated that this would be addressed again at the February 5, 2008 meeting at which time he requested Mr. Nowell to provide responses to the following Council concerns:

1. Provide Council with the complete paperwork for the bid process for the web design.
2. Provide a clear and concise response to concerns regarding security for personal information on the web.
3. Provide clear documentation regarding all fees to be charged and/or waived by Community First Bank.
4. Provide specific information regarding the contracts as to who is a party to the contracts and what services are provided

Administrator's Report:

Mr. Surrett had no report at this meeting.

Council Committee Reports:

Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management:

Mr. Lyles had no report at this meeting.

Road & Transportation:

Mr. Crumpton announced that the Committee would meet next at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 5, 2008 to discuss various matter.

Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health & Welfare Committee Report:

Mr. Crumpton had no report at this meeting

Budget, Finance & Administration:

Mr. Ables announced that the Committee would meet next at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 5, 2008 to set goals for funding in the future and other various matter.

Planning & Economic Development:

Mr. Suarez had no report at this meeting.

Board & Commission Appointments:

Board of Zoning Appeals:

Mr. Blanchard asked the remaining members for their appointments to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Appointments are as follow:

District II: No Appointment at this time

District III: No Appointment at this time

District V: Re-Appoint: Mr. Eric Molin, 158 Berkshire Drive, Seneca, SC 29672
864 654 6142

Appointments for District II & III will be added to February 5, 2008 agenda.

Aeronautics Commission:

Mr. Blanchard asked the remaining members for their appointments to the Aeronautics Commission. Appointments are as follow:

District II: No Appointment at this time

District III: No Appointment at this time

District V: Re-Appoint: Mr. Fred Golden, 2010 Kaye Street, Seneca, SC 29678
864 882-4132

Appointments for District II & III will be added to February 5, 2008 agenda.

Old Business:

There was no old business discussed at this meeting.

New Business:

There was no new business discussed at this meeting.

Adjourn:

Mr. Blanchard adjourned Council at 6:55 PM

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth G. Hulse
Clerk to Council