



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
With Oconee County Library Board
March 18, 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 with members of the Oconee County Library Board on Tuesday, March 18, 2008 at 4:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members [except Mr. Ables, Mr. Lyles & Mr. Suarez], 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: David Williams–Anderson Independent and Dick Mangrum – WGOG Radio.

Call to Order:

Chairman Blanchard welcomed members of the Library Board, library staff and Brian Deichman; McMillan, Smith & Partners Architects. He stated that this was an information meeting to allow Council and the Board to interact and to review the Board's proposed plans. Mr. Blanchard stated that if time allowed that the public would be allotted time to ask questions.

Mr. John Adams, Library Board Chairman, introduced Ms. Martha Bailey, Library Director, and Board members present:

- Mr. William "Biff" Kennedy
- Mr. Paul Johanson

Chairman Blanchard also recognized Dr. Michael Thorsland, Assistant Superintendent for Operational Services, School District of Oconee County [SDOC].

Presentation by Oconee County Library Board:

Mr. Adams provided Council with copies of projected population density [filed with these minutes] and gave a brief summary of the Board's work with the SDOC to develop a site plan for a new Oconee County Library in Seneca.

Mr. Adams introduced Mr. Brian Deichman who presented Council with preliminary drawings / site plans for the new Oconee County Library. The plans [filed with these minutes] included an overall plan with the new elementary school and recreation fields, close up view of the library location to include parking and road access, and first and second floor plan designs designating usage for each floor. The planned building would be a two story

building with approximately 34,000 square feet and would have parking for approximately 130 vehicles. The current Oconee County Library in Seneca accounts for approximately 60% of the system wide usage with a building that accounts for only 30% of the space. It is also planned to have CAT bus service to the new facility.

Mr. Blanchard questioned the need for a community room as there are many other facilities in the Seneca area that are not presently used to capacity. Mr. Adams assured Council that the room in the present Seneca branch is widely used and can not accommodate all those wishing to use the space. Currently, the library offers their community room at no cost to the public.

Ms. Bailey outlined the expanded services that the additional space would allow to include an expanded children's area on the first floor and a young adult area on the second floor.

Dr. Thorsland noted that the new facility would coordinate with and compliment the schools programs and libraries.

Mr. Adams presented Council with cost estimates [filed with these minutes] for a turn key facility. In addition, Ms. Bailey provided Council with staffing estimates projected out through 2014 [filed with these minutes]. Lastly, she reviewed the duties of the various positions requested.

Public Questions:

A woman, who did not identify herself, asked the Board what percentage increase would there be in the books available in the new library. Ms. Bailey noted that the shelf space would be increase 4-5 times and stocking would be an ongoing process.

Mr. Larry Biggers asked what the estimated cost for new books would be. Mr. Adams responded that at present some books in the system are given away due to lack of shelf space and that with an enlarged facility this practice would stop. Costs vary by book and no specific dollars were noted.

Mr. C. W. Richards requested that the Board, Library staff and the County refer to the facility only as the Oconee County Library and not the Seneca Library. He noted that the public perception is the library is for only one municipality by referring to the facility that way. Mr. Blanchard noted that this is the number one issue that arises when speaking with citizens about a new library - that it be for the entire county and not specifically the "Seneca's library". He requested that all future discussion of this project and the existing library be referred to as the Oconee County Library in Seneca.

Adjourn:

Mr. Blanchard thanked the Library Board, Ms. Bailey, Mr. Deichman and Dr. Thorsland for the discussion and the informative presentations.

No action was taken by Council at this meeting.

Mr. Blanchard adjourned the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth G. Hulse
Clerk to Council