



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
Regular Meeting
July 1, 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, July 1, 2008 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members [except Mr. Crumpton], 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: Ray Chandler–Anderson Independent, Brett McLaughlin-Daily Journal and Dick Mangrum-WGOG Radio.

Call to Order:

Chairman Blanchard called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

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

Minutes:

Mr. Suarez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 4 – 0 that the minutes from the June 3, 2008 regular meeting, June 9, 2008 Budget, Finance & Administration meeting and the June 13, 2008 called meeting all be adopted as printed.

Public Comment Session:

Mr. Tom Marcovich addressed Council regarding his wish to expand sewer service throughout Oconee County and not limit development to the Commerce Park.

Mr. B. J. Littleton addressed Council regarding the need for additional time to be allocated for each speaker during the Public Comment Session.

Extended Public Comment Session:

Ms. Polly Nicolay: Prayer at Meeting of Public Bodies:

Ms. Nicolay addressed Council regarding her desire to see specifically Christian prayer reinstated at meetings of the Council. She noted that this country was founded on Christian values and that prayer should have a place at our meetings. Ms. Nicolay provided copies of her book “We the People Take America Back” to the council members and read a portion into the record from page 17.

Mr. Berry Nichols: Zoning:

Mr. Berry Nichols addressed Council regarding his concerns that the community has not been fully involved in the planning process regarding potential zoning in Oconee County. He felt that community meetings should be scheduled before the Zoning Enabling Ordinance [ZEO] is brought back to Council for action. Mr. Nichols also read a letter into the record outlining his feelings about preserving the way of life here.

Mr. Blanchard noted that public meetings are in the works and the schedule will be forthcoming for citizen participation in the zoning process.

Items for Consideration by Council:

PRT: ATAX request / \$8,400 / South Carolina Apple Festival:

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 4 – 0 to approve \$8,400 for advertising for the South Carolina Apple Festival.

PRT: ATAX request / \$788 / Blue Ridge Arts Council “Fiber Arts & Quilts”:

Mr. Suarez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ables, approved 4 – 0 to approve \$788 to cover printing costs for the Blue Ridge Arts Council’s show “Fiber Arts & Quilts”.

Sheriff’s Department: In-Car Video Camera System Program:

Mr. Surrett addressed Council requesting approval for the Sheriff’s Department to accept 10 systems for patrol cars. He noted that the company will be responsible to maintain the equipment.

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 0 to authorize the Sheriff’s Department to accept the 10 in-car video camera systems.

Council Committee Reports:

Transportation:

Mr. Crumpton was not in attendance therefore there was no report.

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

Mr. Blanchard had no report at this meeting.

Budget, Finance & Administration:

Mr. Ables had not report at this meeting.

Planning & Economic Development:

Mr. Suarez had no report at this meeting.

Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management:

Mr. Lyles had no report at this meeting.

Mr. Lyles announced that the **Real Estate, Facilities & Land Management Committee** will meet on Wednesday, July 9, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. in Council Chambers.

In addition, Mr. Lyles stated that Mr. Crumpton wished to schedule the **Transportation Committee** to also meet on Wednesday, July 9, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in Council Chambers.

Commission / Board Reports to Council:

There were no reports presented at this meeting.

Board & Commission Appointments:

Emergency Management Commission:

Mr. Ables had no announcement at this meeting for the District V open seat.

Administrator's Report:

Animal Shelter:

Mr. Surret noted that construction is in process and that they expect to have the skin on the building next week. In addition, there have not been any work injuries during construction and he commended the staff on keeping a safe working environment.

Airport Closures:

Mr. Surrett noted that runway work has begun to fix the raised portion of the runway. They are currently grinding and removing that material to be used for the road bed during a later phase of the project. Mr. Kevin Short, Airport Director, also noted that over the span of approximately 1,900 feet that they will have to remove up to as much as 22.5” of material. As of today, the work is on schedule to have the airport re-opened in time for the first Clemson home football game.

Old Business:

No Old Business was addressed at this meeting.

New Business:

Zoning Enabling Ordinance [ZEO] timeline:

Mr. Suarez questioned if the ZEO timeline was being met in relation to setting up public meetings for comment and input. Mr. Blanchard advised that they are on target. Mr. Ryan Honea, Planning Commission member, noted that the Commission is working on the ZEO and getting a schedule together for meetings.

Drought Conditions:

Mr. Blanchard noted that the Upstate area including Oconee County has been designated as being under “serious drought” conditions. He noted that the County should be doing all that it can to help conserve along with the citizens.

SWAG Agreement / Golden Commerce Park Feedback:

Mr. Norton noted that the SWAG agreement prepared by Mr. Lowell Ross required some work and he has made modifications and distributed the document to the three municipalities for their review/signatures. He stated he would keep Council apprised of progress on getting this document finalized.

Mr. Surrett stated that he felt that the septic option for the Commerce Park needs to be reviewed further. He noted that he discussed with the school district how septic systems have worked for them.

Mr. Ables questioned why the presentation at the June 26, 2008 meeting with the Sewer Authority did not include options for exits #1, #2 and #4.

Discussion followed. Mr. Blanchard asked Mr. Surrett to follow up with the Sewer Authority and request that they provide Council with information regarding:

1. Septic system option for start up at the Commerce Park
2. Sewer options for I85 exits #1, #2 and #4

It was also noted that the Sewer Authority should work closely with Economic Development to approach potential industries to identify viable customers for the Commerce Park and I85.

Executive Session:

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Suarez, approved 4 – 0 to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a contractual matter.

Council entered Executive Session at 7:42 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 8:31 p.m.

Mr. Blanchard noted that no action will be taken on matters discussed in Executive Session.

Adjourn:

Mr. Blanchard motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth G. Hulse
Clerk to Council