

Minutes

6:00 PM, Monday, August 8th, 2022

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

Members Present

Rex Blanton

Charlie Whiten

Debbie Sewell

Kim Alexander

Staff Present

Vivian

Media Present

None

1. Call to order- Ms. Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm

2. Invocation

3. Pledge of allegiance

4. Approval of minutes-June 13th, 2022. Mr. Whiten made a motion to approve minutes, seconded by Mr. Blanton. Ms. Alexander called for a vote. The motion passed 4/0.

5. Public Comment Session [3 minutes per person] If you are not able to attend in person and you have a comment, you may submit it by contacting the Planning Department at planninginfo@oconeesc.com or 864-638-4218, so that we may receive your comment and read it into the record

None at this meeting.

6. Discussions [to include vote and/or action on matters brought up in discussion if required]

I. Farm Bureau- First Bite Resolution- Ms. Alexander turned the floor over to Mr. Whiten to explain and provide information on the resolution. The Farm bureau is looking to have a resolution presented to the South Carolina Legislature. This resolution helps to protect farms/ farmers in their right to have their animals that provide protection for their farm. This is law in 16 other states. First Bite definition is if you are bitten by an animal on a farm and this is the first occurrence the farmer/landowner is protected from legal action. Discussion for the support of this resolution when the Farm Bureau has this ready to present to the State Legislature. Mr. Whiten will keep the board updated on the progress.

II. Legislative Update- Mr. Whiten provided information that the state has passed a bill to eliminate taxes on agriculture buildings.

III. Farmland Reduction Protection- This is a follow up to the June 13, 2022, meeting. presentation from Dr. Adam Kantrovich- extension specialist. Along with protecting the family farm information. Ms. Alexander thanked Mr. Rex Blanton for working on this and having the presentation from Dr. Kantrovich. Ms. Alexander turned the floor over to Mr. Blanton for further discussion and updates.

Mr. Blanton updated the board on several ways to help farmers protect their land. The citizen-initiated protection of 50 acres or more. This is one way for the landowner to choose for themselves what they choose for their property. Land trusts are another example of land conservation one can choose. There are several land trusts in the state. Mr. Whiten mentioned that the Farm Bureau may be looking into a similar land trust.

IV Heritage Farm Support- This was apart of the discussion above on helping and preserving the family farm.

UPDATES: September 20,2022 Opening Day for the Heritage Fair with a Dinner at Oakway School. All members are invited to attend. Announcement of a meeting needed for members to attend. Ms. Alexander requested announcement for this and the fair as members will be in attendance.

Mr. Blanton brought up the interest in community garden at the FARM Center. This is a great opportunity for the OFC and the FARM Center to work together.

Ms. Alexander suggested we have Mandolin Bright- Operations Director of Oconee Food Council back for an update, and get Tessa and Ashley involved because they are our liaisons for OFC.

7. Adjourn – Ms. Sewell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Blanton and approved.