

## Minutes

6:00 PM, Monday, July 10, 2023

### FIRE DEPARTMENT

#### Members Present

Joshua Owens

Charlie Whiten

Rex Blanton

Tessa Moxley

Kim Alexander

Trent Smith

Chris Talley

#### Staff Present

James Coley

#### Media Present

None

1. **Call to order-** Ms. Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.
2. **Moment of silence**
3. **Invocation**
4. **Pledge of allegiance**
5. **Approval of minutes-** May 8, 2023. Mr. Owens made a motion to approve the minutes seconded by Mr. Whiten and approved 6/0.
6. **Presentations**
  - **Mission goals and vision**
  - **Members of the board and contact information**
  - **Partner organizations**
  - **Citizen initiated zoning**
7. **Public discussion 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](mailto:planninginfo@oconeesc.com) or 864-638-4218, so that we may receive your comment and read it into the record*
8. **Discussion** regarding establishment of an "Agricultural 2" zoning district and other matters related there to.
  - Public Comment
    - i. Joshua Owens regarding forestry industry. 30% of farmland on the 2017 census is woodland. 100,00 acres in Oconee County. 23 billion dollar industry in south carolina. We are losing the market. Canton Paper Mill just closed. In the last two years, several lumber, chipping, and pulp mill businesses in the region have closed down.

Mr. Owens expressed concern that without financial incentives to manage the forest, they will deteriorate, and Oconee County forests will decrease in value, leading farmers to be forced into selling the land instead of being able to sell the timber on the land. It will take years to regenerate the market. The pulp market will move to South America if nothing is done, because there is a big market for it there.

- ii. Ms. Alexander suggests that we invite Mr. Gilbert to the August meeting, as well as any loggers and the largest landowners in the county that can make it to the meeting. Mr. Smith agreed to speak Mr. Holland about attending the meeting.
- iii. Discussion ensued about the forestry industry in general, who owns the market, and what may be available to the growers in Oconee County.

- o Proposal to include an Ag District II, the only additional restriction being that there can be only 1 dwelling per 5 acres instead of 1 dwelling per 1 acre.

- i. General discussion is in opposition, the reason being that it is already difficult getting farmers to zone their land with the 1 to 1 restriction. There is a consensus that there is no point to creating a greater land restriction because farmers will be even less likely to zone their land.

- o Discussion/vote

- i. Mr. Whiten made a motion to make forestry the main topic of discussion at the August meeting, seconded by Mr. Smith and approved 6/0.
- ii. Mr. Owens made a motion to leave the agriculture zoning as it currently stands, seconded by Mr. Whiten and approved 6/0.
- iii. Ms. Moxley made a motion for the Ag Advisory board to present to Council a request to have the Planning Department re-implement an Impact Fee Study, seconded by Mr. Blanton and approved 6/0.

**9. Adjourn:** Ms. Whiten made a motion to adjourn at 7:06pm, seconded by Mr. Blanton and approved 6/0.