



MINUTES
LAW ENFORCEMENT, PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH &
WELFARE COMMITTEE MEETING
January 26, 2010

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Wayne McCall, Chairman, District II
Mr. Mario Suarez, District III
Mr. Joel Thrift, District IV

The Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health & Welfare Committee met on Tuesday, January 26, 2010 at 5:30 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Committee Members present [except Mr. Suarez], Interim Administrator Gene Klugh and Elizabeth G. Hulse, Clerk to Council present.

Oconee County Staff present: Mr. Lake Julian, Facilities Maintenance Director & Mr. Rodney Burdette, Emergency Services.

Guests present: Mr. Danny Ard, Architect, Mr. David Smith, City of Westminster Administrator & Chief Smith, City of Westminster.

Press:

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeese.com/council]. In addition it was made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Member of the press present: Dick Mangrum – WGOG Radio, Ray Chandler – Anderson Independent & Carlos Galarza - Daily Journal.

Call to Order:

Chairman McCall called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Thrift made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCall approved 2 – 0 that the minutes from the November 10, 2009 meeting be adopted as printed.

Written Statement from Committee Member:

Mr. McCall recognized the Clerk to Council who read into the record a statement [filed with these minutes] from Mr. Suarez who was unable to attend the meeting.

Review & Discussion regarding Plans for Joint Fire Station:

Mr. McCall asked Mr. Lake Julian and Mr. Danny Ard to step forward and address the Committee regarding issues related to the plans for the joint fire station with the City of Westminster.

Mr. Julian first discussed “alternatives” [page 5] from the J. Davis Cost Budget dated May 2009. Mr. Julian and Mr. Ard addressed several of the issues in some length.

It was the consensus of the committee that no additional items be added and no items be deducted from the cost budget.

Mr. Ard presented two plans for the Committee review [A101, Rev N and A101, Rev. L] and discussion. The committee reviewed aspects of both plans - discussion followed.

It was the consensus of the committee to recommend to full Council for final approval plan A101, Rev N.

Public Comment:

Mr. McCall opened the floor for Public Comment.

Mr. Berry Nichols addressed the Committee regarding several concerns to include: [1] DHEC permitting, [2] the bid process, [3] the inspection process for the building, [4] additional proposed road for access, and [5] questioning the firmness of the budget.

Ms. Susie Cornelius addressed the Committee regarding several concerns to include: [1] utilizing funding originally designated for Solid Waste and the burden to the tax payer [letter provided as backup to this point filed with these minutes], [2] location, [3] OMC ambulances in the station without a formal contract, and [4] Emergency Operation Plan/Duke name confusion.

New Business:

Ingress/Egress for the Joint Fire Station:

Mr. McCall asked Mr. David Smith, Westminster City Administrator, about ingress and egress. Both Mr. Smith and Chief Smith stated that this would be on Norris Street and they stated that no additional road will be constructed for the station.

Status regarding Use of Lights/Sirens upon Exit from the Joint Fire Station:

Mr. McCall questioned if an agreement had been made with local citizens to alter the lights/siren policy for this station. Chief Smith explained that lights are turned on while still in the fire station and that the siren will be turned on by the time the truck reaches the public street. He stated that if a citizen could hear the siren before at the intersection they will still hear the siren - no change. He also stated that no agreement has been made to alter their normal procedures.

Drug Seizure Funds / Sheriff Department:

Mr. McCall asked the Administrator to research and report back to the committee regarding state and federal laws that relate to the uses for drug seizure funds by the Sheriff's Department. He specifically asked for information related to potentially using some of these funds for electronics at a new jail facility.

In a related matter, Mr. Thrift asked the Administrator to also look into potentially auditing these accounts in the future.

Station 21 / Request for dispatch for all structure fires:

Chief Burdette addressed the Committee and reviewed a request from the local Chief's Association noting that as a result of their meeting they asked for a formal change in policy. They requested that Station 21 be dispatched for all structure fires in Oconee County. Currently they respond only if requested. Discussion followed.

The consensus of the committee and the Administrator was to recommend to Council implementation of this as policy.

FY 2010-2011 Budget:

Mr. Thrift asked the Administrator to work closely with Chief Burdette to identify ways to trim the budget for Station 21 and the Emergency Services Department. Discussion followed.

It was the consensus of the committee to recommend to the Administrator and Chief Burdette that any open positions not be filled until the budget priorities for FY 2010-2011 have been established.

Old Business:

None discussed at this meeting.

Adjourn:

Mr. Thrift made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. McCall, approved unanimously at 6:34 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth G. Hulse
Clerk to Council