

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



TEL (864) 638-4218 FAX (864) 638-4168

LIMITED IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE PERMITTED

Due to the Novel Coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing state of emergency, in-person attendance at this Commission meeting by members of the general public will be limited. Attendance will be limited to twenty percent of the stated maximum occupancy, which equates to thirty-four (34) persons (including Council members, other elected officials, and staff). Attendees will be required to sit in designated seats, appropriately spaced. In-person attendance will be allowed on a "first-come" basis.

*Additionally, to ensure the meeting otherwise remains open to the public, we will continue to broadcast it live on the County's YouTube channel, which can be found via the County's website at Oconeesc.com. Further, the public may call in and listen by dialing **888-475-4499 OR 877-853-5257** and entering meeting ID # **828 4377 0168**. And, individuals parked in close proximity to Council Chambers may listen to the meeting on FM 92.3.*

Minutes

5:00 pm- Thursday, March 15, 2021

Council Chambers - Oconee County Administrative Complex

Members Present

Frankie Pearson
Mike Smith
Dave Nix
Alex Vassey
Mike Johnson
Gary Gaulin
Pat Williams

Staff Present

Adam Chapman
Vivian Kompier

Media Present

Lauren Pierce

1. Call to Order – Mr. Smith called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.
2. Invocation.
3. Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Public Comment for non-agenda items – None
5. Commission member comment – Mr. Smith stated that the time for public comment has changed from three to four minutes and he would like to add "Staff Updates" as a new agenda item.
6. Approval of minutes: 03/01/2021 –Mr. Pearson made a motion to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. Nix and approved 7/0.
7. Entertainment & Recreation – Guest Speakers: Riley Johnson & Ken Sloan
Riley Johnson (City of Seneca Events Coordinator) said the City of Seneca hosted a 5K the previous weekend and 488 runners participated. The event attracted patrons for local hotels, campgrounds and restaurants. The City of Seneca hosts approximately fifty (50) events annually to increase tourism and attract patrons to the City, including:
 1. Jazz on the Alley scheduled every Thursday, beginning March 25, 2021.
 2. Cruizin' on Main scheduled the first Saturday of every month.
 3. Independence Day Celebration on July 3, 2021.

Citizens may visit website (www.seneca.sc.us) or the City Facebook page (Seneca, SC Events) to see what is happening in the City of Seneca.

Ken Sloan (Visit Oconee) Visit Oconee is a marketing organization which markets Oconee County, South Carolina, as a place to stay and play. Marketing strategies for Oconee County include:

1. Fifty thousand visits to the Visit Oconee website per month.
2. Sixty thousand Visitor Guides are distributed every year.
3. Seventy-five thousand social media likes every month.
4. One million individuals reached via social media channels each month.

Funding primarily through local accommodations taxes.

8. Housing challenges in Oconee County report:

Mr. Smith made a motion to accept the report, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Gaulin. Mr. Smith opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Nix noted that sewer will drive higher wages within the County. Discussion regarding the role sewer has in the establishment of affordable housing and high paying jobs continued.

Mr. Gaulin made a motion to refer the report to County Council. Seconded by Johnson. Discussion continued.

Mr. Gaulin made a motion to amend his previous motion to include that a member of the Planning Commission take the report to County Council as an answer to the Comprehensive Plan. Seconded by Mr. Vassey and approved 7/0.

9. 2010-2020 Oconee County collision report:

Mr. Chapman presented the report to the Planning Commission. Report included in the backup was requested by the Planning & Economic Development Committee. Mr. Pearson made a motion to refer the report to the Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Committee for review. Seconded by Mr. Johnson and approved 7/0.

10. Planning Commission schedule amendment:

Mr. Smith made a motion to cancel the April and May scheduled meetings (four total) and return on June 7, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Gaulin and approved 5/2. Mr. Pearson and Mr. Nix opposed.

11. Planning Commission meeting time discussion:

Mr. Pearson asked the Commission to consider moving meetings to 6:00 pm. No action taken.

12. Staff comments:

Mr. Chapman spoke to his time with Oconee County, suggested the Commission continue to be cordial while discussing topics and asked that they please continue to support farmers and agriculture after he takes his leave.

Mr. Smith thanked Mr. Chapman for all he has done for the Commission.

13. Adjourn – Meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 7:08 pm.

Anyone wishing to submit written comments to the Planning Commission can send their comments to the Planning Department by mail or by emailing them to the email address below. Please Note: If you would like to receive a copy of the agenda via email please contact our office, or email us at achapman@oconeesc.com.