

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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

Minutes

5:00 pm- Monday, December 6, 2021

Council Chambers - Oconee County Administrative Complex

Members Present

Alex Vassey
Mike Smith
Pat Williams
Mike Johnson

Gary Gaulin
Frankie Pearson
David Nix

Staff Present

James Coley
Vivian Kompier

Media Present

Lauren Pierce – The Journal

1. Call to order – Mr. Smith called meeting to order at 5:00 PM.
2. Invocation was led by Mr. Gary Gaulin
3. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Smith.
4. Approval of minutes for November 15, 2021 – Mr. Pearson made a motion to approve the minutes for November 15th, with the provision that Mr. Johnson be added to the members present; seconded by Mr. Nix. Mr. Smith called for a vote; motion was approved unanimously 7/0.
5. Public comment (non-agenda items) – None
6. Commission member comments
 - a. Mr. Smith acknowledged a rental housing information sheet compiled by the Golden Corner Food Pantry.
 - b. Mr. Pearson wished his fellow Commission members a Merry Christmas.
 - c. Mr. Williams applauded the Planning Commission bringing the need for a Convenience Center in the Tamasee and Salem area to the attention of the County Council.
 - d. Mr. Gaulin updated the Commission on Fair Play's desire to have a master plan with regards to the south sewer project.
7. Staff comments
 - a. Mr. Coley updated the members on the status of the Junkyard Ordinance and ongoing development projects. At the request of Mr. Gaulin, Mr. Coley introduced himself.

8. Report to Council (Public Hearing Summary) – Mr. Coley summarized the report for Commission Members.
 - a. Public comment (4 minutes per person) - None
 - b. Discussion / vote – Mr. Gaulin suggested that the report be revised to show the addressee as Chairman of County Council. Mr. Smith made a motion that the revised summary letter be accepted as presented and forwarded to the County Council by the Planning Department as soon as possible. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Mr. Smith called for a vote. The motion was approved 5/2, with Mr. Pearson and Mr. Nix opposing.
9. Addresses added over the last 3 years – Mr. Smith shared information regarding addresses added over the last three years. Information was provided by Lisa Simmering, GIS Manager. Discussion included, but was not limited to, the importance that the Planning Commission meet their responsibilities to shepherd the growth of the County and eliminate/minimize any negative effects of the growth.
10. Authorization of James Coley to review and sign plats on behalf of the Planning Commission
 - a. Public comment – None
 - b. Discussion / vote – Mr. Smith made a motion that James Coley, the Planning Director, be authorized by the Planning Commission to review and sign plats. Mr. Gaulin seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Mr. Smith called for a vote. The motion was approved unanimously 7/0.
11. 2022 Planning Commission meeting schedule
 - a. Public comment – None
 - b. Discussion / vote – Mr. Smith suggested a trial run of one meeting per month for the first 3 months of 2022 with the plan to review productivity and quality of work of the Commission to determine if two meetings a month are best. He also suggested that the Commission implement a task force / sub-committee structure to address priorities of the Commission in the hope that the results of the work will be more targeted, detailed, and productive. Mr. Coley stated he would support the Commission on their decision either way, but could see the value in less meetings with a more focused approach. Mr. Smith made a motion that the Planning Commission schedule of two meetings per month be accepted, but that one meeting be cancelled in February and March to evaluate productivity and that the meeting schedule be re-evaluated by the Chairman and discussed in the March 2022 meeting. Mr. Gaulin seconded the motion. A lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Smith called for a vote. The motion was approved 4/3, with Mr. Johnson, Mr. Pearson, and Mr. Nix opposing. Discussion on which meetings to cancel in February and March followed. Mr. Smith made a motion to cancel the February 7, 2022 and March 7, 2022 Planning Commission meetings. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. No discussion. Mr. Smith called for a vote. The motion was approved 6/1, with Mr. Pearson opposing.
12. Chairman’s year-end closing comments – Mr. Smith reviewed the year, highlighting the challenges and the accomplishments.
13. Adjourn – Mr. Smith made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Pearson seconded the motion. Mr. Smith called for a vote. The motion was approved unanimously 7/0 at 5:55 PM.