



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY
CAPITAL PROJECT SALES TAX COMMISSION
March 10, 2014

MEMBERS

Mr. Russell Price, Chairperson, County Representative
Ms. Thelma Miller, Vice Chairperson, City of Walhalla Representative
Ms. Brenda Davis, City of Westminster Representative
Mr. Don Fuller, County Representative
Mr. Glen McPheeters, County Representative
Ms. Mollie Smith, City of Seneca Representative

The Oconee County Capital Sales Tax Commission [CPSTC] met at 6:30 PM in the Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all representatives present and Clerk to Council Elizabeth G. Hulse present.

Entity Representatives Present: Mr. Luther Lyle, Cherokee Museum; Mr. Phil Shirley, Oconee County Indoor Rec/Aquatic Center; Mr. Danny Day, Oconee Library System Enhancements; Mr. Brandon Shirley, Oconee 9/11 Memorial; Mr. Daniel Smith, Golden Corner Community Center; Ms. Leslie White, Oconee Heritage Center; Mr. Stanley Gibson, Foothills Agriculture Resource Center; and, Mr. Brad Norton, Salem Economic Development and Senior / Recreation Center.

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 [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens. Member of the press present: Ray Chandler – Anderson Independent, Carlos Galarza -The Daily Journal.

Call to Order:

Mr. Price called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Fuller made a motion, seconded by Ms. Davis, approved 6 – 0 to approve the minutes from the January 22, 2014, January 30, 2014, February 19, 2014 and February 26, 2014 meetings as presented.

Commission Q&A Session with Project Entity Representatives:

Mr. Price began the question and answer period with the entity representatives reading from prepared questions [copy filed with these minutes] that had been provided to each entity in preparation for the meeting.

Library System Enhancement Project:

Discussion followed regarding several key aspects of the project to include [question – *answer*]:

- Is the OCPL aware that the County Planning Commission recommended to County Council & County Council approved their recommendation to reduce the amount for the Seneca Branch – asking the OCPL to review to determine ways to lower your projects costs? *No. Mr. Fuller asked the Clerk how this information was presented. Ms. Hulse noted that the agenda and backup for the Planning Commission and Council are on line and that Department Heads are advised after each Council meeting of council actions. Additionally, this matter was covered by the local media.*
- Is the OCPL willing to discuss ways to reduce the \$15,448.560 Project costs? – *Yes, the Board is always searching for opportunities to reduce building costs. The Board has not been allocated funding*

for full plan development; i.e., architect drawings, etc. The Board's plan for the Seneca branch is for a one story building based on utilizing the current site for development and this has reduced the amount requested.

- Why had the Library Board not coordinated the Salem Branch project with the Town Salem much earlier to determine their needs? – *The Board was not approached by the Town regarding their inclusion of a library as part of their project. The Board is always willing to work with a municipality to coordinate a county library in their jurisdiction. Discussion followed. Mr. Day presented two maps to the Commission [copies filed with these minutes] highlighting coverage area with existing libraries and one highlighting proposed coverage as requested.*
- New Library size 29,712 square feet vs. proposed 32,000 square feet – why upsize? – *To anticipate future needs.*
- Cost per Square Foot and Site Location Discussed – The cost per square foot is \$281.13 versus other projects at no more than \$250? - *This number includes books, other equipment, etc. The current site was selected by the board after cost estimates were received for the study's first choice.*

Golden Corner Community Center

Discussion followed regarding several key aspects of the project to include [question – *answer*]:

- If funding is not approved for a library branch as requested in your project = how much would that reduce your request for funding for your project? *None. The project is for the full building and which entities use the facility will be determined by their desire to partner with the Center. The Center is designed to be a community hub with various entities and programs offered.*

Senior / Recreation Center

Discussion followed regarding several key aspects of the project to include [question – *answer*]:

- If funding is not approved for a library branch as requested in your project = how much would that reduce your request for funding for your project? *None. The project is for the full building only and the build out will take place over time and is not part of this request.*

Northern Economic Development

Discussion followed regarding several key aspects of the project to include [question – *answer*]:

- How much of the \$1,300,000 that the Northern Economic Development project is estimated to cost relates to the replacement of the existing PVC water line, and how much relates to the extension of the water line into an area not currently serviced. ? *The City is putting \$250,000 into this project also if approved and that will likely cover the cost for the current water line replacement with the balance of funds received from the tax going toward expansion.*

Mr. Price opened the floor to the Commission to ask questions of any of the entity representatives present:

Cherokee Museum	No Questions
Walhalla Water Plant	No Representative Present – No Questions
Indoor Rec/Aquatic Center	No Questions
Oconee 9/11 Memorial	No Questions
Oconee Heritage Center	No Questions
Foothills Ag/Resource Center	No Questions

Public Q&A Session with Project Entity Representatives:

Mr. Dick Hughes addressed the Commission asking the following questions regarding the Indoor Rec/Aquatic Center:

- *If the county owns the land and builds the building – who is responsible for maintaining the facility?* Mr. Phil Shirley, Oconee PRT Director, addressed Mr. Hughes question

noting that the land was donated by the hospital and the project will be a county owned building. The intent at this time is to lease the facility with the lessee being responsible for all operations and maintenance on the facility.

- *Why would taxpayers have to pay the tax to build the building and then be required to pay a fee to use the facility?* Mr. Shirley noted that the tax is designed to cover the capital costs of building the facility. The user fees are necessary to ensure the sustainability of the facility to keep it going.

Mr. Dick Hughes addressed the Commission asking the following question regarding the Library System Enhancement:

- *If the project proposed by the Golden Corner Community Center does not include library space what is the Boards intent regarding a facility in that part of the county?* Mr. Danny Day, Library Board Chair, addressed Mr. Hughes question noting that it is the library board's intent to build a library in the southern end of the county. He stated that the board is willing to look at a joint project with the Community Center.

Mr. Price opened the floor for any other citizens wishing to ask a question of an entity representative.

Mr. Kevin Larkin addressed the Commission asking the following question regarding the Indoor Rec/Aquatic Center:

- *Is part of the proposal for the county owned Indoor Recreation / Aquatic Center going to be in direct competition with local fitness businesses?* Mr. Shirley stated that the intent is not to be in competition with local fitness businesses; the indoor walking track, cardiac rehab, aquatic center has many components; some of which may overlap services offered by some local gyms but many which will not overlap.

Other Business

Mr. Price reviewed with the public the upcoming meeting schedule:

- March 13, 2014
- March 17, 2014
- March 27, 2014
- April 10, 2014

Adjourn

Mr. Fuller made a motion, approved unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth G. Hulse
Clerk to Council