



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
Budget Public Hearings
June 11, 2012

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. Joel Thrift, District IV, Council Chairman
Mr. Paul Corbeil, District I, Vice Chairman
Mr. Wayne McCall, District II, Chairman Pro Tem
Mr. Archie Barron, District III
Mr. Reg Dexter, District V

Oconee County Council met at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, Administrator Scott Moulder, Asst. Administrator Glenn Breed and Clerk to Council, Elizabeth Hulse present.

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, Dick Mangrum – WGOG Radio & Carlos Galarza - Daily Journal.

Call to Order:

Mr. Thrift called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Administrator Summary Presentation:

Prior to beginning the public hearings for the three budget ordinances; Mr. Thrift asked the Administrator to give a brief summary of the budget and budget priorities.

Mr. Moulder addressed Council initially reading the budget transmittal letter into the record [copy filed with these minutes]. Next he briefly summarized the FY2012-2013 budget, revenues and capital projects utilizing several handouts [copies filed with these minutes].

Council thanked the Administrator and Finance Department staff for a job well done.

Public Hearing regarding the Following Ordinances:

Ordinance 2012-01 “AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR OCONEE COUNTY AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR ORDINARY COUNTY PURPOSES IN OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2012 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2013”

Mr. Thrift opened the floor for Public Comment for Ordinance 2012-01.

Mr. Berry Nichols addressed Council regarding **Ordinance 2012-02** voicing concerns with the School District of Oconee [SDOC] budget. He stated his opposition to the county funding a state mandated salary increase for teachers and noting that the district should not be getting a \$3.7 million increase in these difficult economic times. Mr. Nichols also voiced concerns that the Republican Primary scheduled for Tuesday, June 12, 2012 was cancelled.

Mr. Corbeil and Mr. Dexter both addressed Mr. Nichols noting that the Senate has approved funding for the teacher increase and that the house has it under consideration at the

present time. Both noted that if the salary increase is funded that Council will reduce the SDOC budget accordingly.

Ms. Susie Cornelius addressed Council regarding **Ordinance 2012-02** in support of the Council members who voted against this ordinance on second reading. In addition, she stated that the SDOC has a large fund balance which should be used instead of increasing taxes by 7 or 8 mills.

Ms. Cornelius addressed Council regarding **Ordinance 2012-01** specifically voicing concerns with proviso #6, #7, #14 & #15. In addition, she had concerns regarding airport hanger fees requesting that Oconee County planes be given priority for hanger rental as they pay taxes in the county. In addition she voiced concerns with reductions in the PRT budget for county recreation programs.

Ms. Cornelius addressed several issues related to Direct Aid to include Foothills Alliance, Fair Oak Youth Center, Mountain Lakes Business Development Corporation, Sewer Contract. She voiced concerns that requests for these organizations were not done in public and were only submitted in writing for consideration.

Lastly, Ms. Cornelius voiced opposition to placing \$600,000 in overages into the Capital Project Fund and additional funding for Oconee Medical Center Ambulance Service.

Mr. Tom Markovich addressed Council regarding **Ordinance 2012-02** stating that Council has to be responsible for controlling the SDOC budget. He noted they have a large reserve account. In addition, he voiced concerns that one time funding in the amount of approximately \$1.9 million was included in the FY12 budget that they want continued in the FY13 budget. He requested that Council fund the SDOC at last year's amount.

Mr. Jack Collins addressed Council regarding **Ordinance 2012-01** voicing concerns that Council plans to increase capital projects and concerns that Council is deferring capital asset replacement.

Mr. Thrift asked if any citizens wished to address Council regarding this ordinance; no citizen stepped forward.

Mr. Thrift asked if any citizens wished to submit written comments regarding this ordinance; no citizen presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Thrift closed the Public Hearing regarding Ordinance 2012-01.

Ordinance 2012-02 “AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY (the “School District”) AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE OPERATIONS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2012 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2013”

Mr. Thrift opened the floor for Public Comment for Ordinance 2012-02.

Mr. Thrift noted that Mr. Nichols, Ms. Cornelius and Mr. Markovich had already addressed their concerns regarding this ordinance during the hearing for Ordinance 2012-01 [see comments above].

Mr. Thrift opened the floor for any other citizens wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance.

Mr. C. W. Richards addressed Council voicing concerns with the state mandated 2% salary increase for teachers and the SDOC plan to provide a 2% increase for all staff.

Mr. Thrift asked if any citizens wished to address Council regarding this ordinance; no citizen stepped forward.

Mr. Thrift asked if any citizens wished to submit written comments regarding this ordinance; no citizen presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Thrift closed the Public Hearing regarding Ordinance 2012-02.

Ordinance 2012-03 “AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT AND TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2012 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2013”

Mr. Thrift opened the floor for Public Comment for Ordinance 2012-03.

Mr. Thrift asked if any citizens wished to address Council regarding this ordinance; no citizen stepped forward.

Mr. Thrift asked if any citizens wished to submit written comments regarding this ordinance; no citizen presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Thrift closed the Public Hearing regarding Ordinance 2012-03.

Mr. Thrift stated that all comments received will be considered by Council and that each budget is under constant review. In addition, he noted that Council is keeping an eye on Columbia and that Council members are discussing these issues with the county delegation.

Other Business:

None scheduled for this meeting.

Adjourn:

Mr. McCall made a motion, approved unanimously to adjourn at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth G. Hulse
Clerk to Council