



Clarendon County Regular Council Meeting

Monday, June 12, 2023

6:00 PM

Council Chambers, 411 Sunset Drive, Manning, SC 29102

Those in attendance:

Chairman Dwight L. Stewart, Jr.
Councilman Billy G. Richardson
Councilman John P. Coker
Deputy Administrator Ted Felder

Vice Chairman W. J. Frierson, Sr.
Councilman A.C. English
Administrator David W. Epperson
Clerk to Council, Dorothy M. Levy

Press in attendance: Ashley Miller, The Item

Others in attendance included:

Lynden Anthony	George E. Frierson, III	Chars G. Kennedy	Marie Land
Roger Jowers	Bea Simon	Daisy Witherspoon	Gregory Holliday
Jacqueline Blackwell	Jawanna Warren	Shawn Johnson	Cathy Williams
W.L. McCabe	Will Buyck	Chris Rolland	Kate Weschler
Lanette S. Cooper	Barbara Terrey	Johnny Wilson	Jennie Lee
Maureen Calvo	Mary L. Cooper	Meesha Witherspoon	Jose Calvo
Terrey Streath	Michael Streath	Linda Lemon	James Williams
And Other Clarendon County Residents			

Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm. Vice Chairman Frierson led the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

1. Approval of the Agenda

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Agenda for the Regular scheduled Council Meeting for June 12, 2023.

2. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Councilman English and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the minutes for the Regular Council Meeting which was held on May 8, 2023.

3. Service Awards

Prior to the business session of the Regular Council Meeting Linda Lemon, HR Director, Administrator Epperson, and Vice Chairman Frierson, presented two employees with service awards.

- Shannon Griffin 5 years Vanessa Johnson 20 years

Chairman Stewart thanked everyone for their service.

4. Public Comments (3 minutes per speaker)

- **Ms. Sandy Jackson** – stated that her concerns are about Guns and Dogs and, Violence in the neighborhood in which she lived in for 29 years. She stated that she lives on Winter Hill Road off of Hwy. 261. She stated that the dogs chase children and the children cannot play outside anymore. The Sheriff's Department gave the dog owners a citation for the dogs not being on a leash but the dogs are running loose again. Ms. Jackson continued by stating that on June 5, 2023, the windows in her mobile home rattled because of the number of gun shots that were fired in the neighborhood and she doesn't feel safe anymore because she has to walk her dog carrying her gun for her safety.

- **Chairman Stewart** – asked Administrator Epperson to follow up with that.
- **Administrator Epperson** stated that he will follow up with Sheriff Baxley.
- **Mr. Terrance G. Tindal** – stated that he is from the Lighthouse Foundation of South Carolina and the Foundation will be sponsoring a Juneteenth Festival and Parade on Friday, June 16, 2023 on Railroad Avenue, Downtown Summerton from 4pm to 7pm. He stated that there will be storytelling, a parade, vendors, and it will be open to the public.
- **Ms. Jawana Warren** – stated that she lives in the Winter Hill area, and one night there were 50 shots fired at the same house. She stated that she lived in that neighborhood for 10 years and they never had problems until someone else moved in the last house in the neighborhood. She stated that she will not let her children play outside anymore for their safety and something has to be done.
- **Ms. Chars G. Kennedy** – stated that her concerns were about road signs on Walker Gamble road. She stated that this is the fourth time that she is coming before Council. She continued by stating that the signs on Walker Gamble Road were supposed to be temporary signs, but the temporary signs are still there.
 - **Administrator Epperson** stated that the signs were ordered but they are not in yet, and when we get them in, they will be installed.
 - **Ms. Kennedy** asked if there is a penalty for stealing signs
 - **Administrator Epperson** stated that it is hard to prosecute someone if you did not see them steal the sign.
 - **Councilman Coker** stated that some one will have to admit to stealing signs and no one is going to admit to stealing signs.
- Chairman Stewart stated that this is very frustrating to everyone, and this is the end of the public comments.

5. Clarendon County Transportation Committee (CTC) – Mr. Ted Felder

Chairman Stewart called the Clarendon County Transportation Committee to Order at 6:21 pm.

Mr. Ted Felder, Deputy Administrator, began by requesting funds for the 2023/2024 Road Project:

- He stated that there are drainage projects and pipe cleaning of Catch Basins and Raccoon Road – Districts 1 and 2.
- Pipe Repair depressions on Padgett Hwy – District 3.
- Grade road roads, repair pipes, and clean ditches on Herod, Windham, Flagbury, and Dudie Roads – District 2.
- Patch Resurface on Mockingbird Lane, Rockfish Drive, and JW Rhames Roads.
- He stated that the above roads will be repaired with the County Portion of C -Funds.
- Resurface Allendale, East Keith, and East Huggins Streets in Manning with the State Portion of C-Fund.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Councilman Coker, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the request for funding from the Clarendon County Transportation Committee to complete the Road Projects for the 2023/2024 Fiscal Year.

Chairman Stewart stated that the Clarendon County Transportation Committee will close. The CTC closed at 6:24 pm.

6. Presentation – Clarendon County School District

Dr. Shawn Johnson, Superintendent began by introducing Mrs. Cathy Williams, Finance Director.

- Mrs. Williams began by stating that the budget is based upon the latest information we have from the State, County Treasurer, and County Auditor. The budget estimates revenue of \$46,096,845.34.

She said the budget includes the same salary schedule as the 2022-2023 budget, with the exception of granting teachers a mandated \$2500 pay increase and adjusting the bus driver scale to meet the state minimum requirement. Mrs. Williams continued by stating that the district is requesting that the school operating millage (168.9) and the Vocational School millage (3.9) remain the same as last year. She continued by stating that the district is also requesting the funding to support the Clarendon Adult Education Program. Mrs. Williams stated that the District is not requesting a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year.

- Mrs. Williams concluded her presentation by listing the Capital Improvement Budget request items: HVAC Replacements, Custodial Equipment, Maintenance Equipment, Wellness Room Equipment, Security Camera Upgrades, District Networking Infrastructure, Access Control Points, Sports Field Care, District Lawn Care, District Copier/Printer Maintenance, Manning Jr. High School Modular Unit, Scott's Branch Middle/High School Bathroom Renovations, Scott's Branch Middle/High School Door/Lock Repairs.
- Councilman Richardson asked how the school is doing.
- Dr. Johnson responded by stating that the schools are doing well. He stated that the teacher's shortage has not affect the district and we are trying to upgrade all facilities.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Budget Request from Clarendon County School District.

7. Presentation of Proposed FY2023-2024 Budget – Mr. Lynden Anthony

Mr. Anthony began his presentation by thanking the staff of the Finance department, our department managers, elected officials, and members of the public that have assisted in producing the balanced budget. This has been another challenging year in terms of planning for the upcoming year and prioritizing resources.

The budget that we are submitting for Third Reading contains no millage increase for County operations through the General Fund, the Library Special Tax District or support for FREE. Dubose Vocational School. We are continuing to see our collections of Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) revenue increase over what we have received in prior years. We are recommending an increase of \$600,000 to the Local Option Sales Tax credit given back to our taxpayers; the credit would then become \$4.3 million.

As required under our Compensation policy, we have included a salary increase of 1.6% for our employees across all operating Funds. Total General Fund revenues and expenses are anticipated to be a little more than \$27 million. In terms of intra-fund transfers, we are requesting that the Hospitality Fee Fund increase its level of operational support for Weldon to \$95,000; as well as a \$10,000 transfer from the General Fund again this year.

With regards to the Fire Rescue service, the budget submission reflects an estimated 7.5 millage increase. The Fire Rescue budget is also balanced at \$8.3 million; supported through tax collections within the Emergency Services Special Tax District. The impact to our citizens will be reduced as a result of the increased LOST credit.

We would like to include in Third Reading our request that a \$2 million Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) be approved in the event it becomes necessary for cash flow purposes. We do not anticipate the need; but it is a part of our annual planning process.

No changes have been made to our Enterprise fund budgets (Weldon Auditorium or the Water and Sewer System).

This year we have four (4) separate borrowing requests:

- The first is a \$350,000 five (5) year lease to acquire vehicles for our Sheriff department, Detention center, and county-wide administration to close in July.

- A second issuance in the early spring would be in the amount of \$590,000 to acquire a new fire engine, anticipated to be delivered in March 2024; also, a five (5) year instrument.
- Additionally, we are requesting authorization to enter into a financing arrangement for the purchase of radios for our emergency response entities. We have included an amount not to exceed \$800,000 financed over ten (10) years, if possible, to close in February, 2024.
- Lastly, we have the General Obligation issuance associated with the debt service requirements on the Courthouse and 2022 Facilities Corp IPRB projects, to also close in February of 2024.

For purposes of this Third reading, I would like to “formally” state that we have the following expenses contained within the FY2024 Budget:

General Fund	\$ 27,222,880
General County Debt	1,668,137
FE Dubose Voc. Tech.	310,000
Fire Rescue	8,308,640
Fire Debt	216,263
Emergency Services	2,067,890
Emergency Services Debt	97,200
Library	739,380
Admin Complex Debt svc	487,370
Courthouse Debt svc	259,969
Capital Projects Series 2022	<u>1,036,612</u>
Total Appropriations	\$ 42,414,341
Water & Sewer (op ex)	\$ 962,010
Weldon Auditorium (op ex)	\$ 147,390

8. Ordinance 2023-01

On motion by Councilman English and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Third and Final Reading of Ordinance 2023-01 – An Ordinance to Provide for a Levy of Taxes for County purposes of Clarendon County, SC., for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024, to direct the Expenditures of said Taxes and other Funds for Clarendon County, and to provide for other matters related thereto including the Administrative Accountability procedures to be followed during implementation of the Budget (Operating and Capital) for Clarendon County for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2023 and Ending June 30, 2024.

9. Ordinance 2023-02

Administrator Epperson stated that this Ordinance would allow the County to refinance the loan on the Weldon Auditorium not to exceed \$5,000,000 for a 20-year period and allowing up to \$2,000,000 of that \$5,000,000 to pay for the repairs on the Weldon Auditorium. He continued by stating that the loan will be paid with money received from Hospitality Fees which is money that the County received from prepared food and beverages. He stated that the county received around \$415,000 to \$420,000 per year which would be enough to cover the yearly loan payment of \$350,000.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Councilman English, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Third and Final Reading of Ordinance 2023-02 - An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance 2008-09, as Amended by Ordinance 2009-14, and Ordinance 2010-05, to Authorize the County to Enter into an Enterprise Financing Agreement and/or Issue Revenue Bonds, in One or More Series, Taxable or Tax-Exempt, In an Aggregate Amount not to Exceed \$5,000,000 to be Paid from and Secured by a Pledge of an Enterprise Charge and/or Hospitality Fees Collected by the County; Approving the Form and Terms of Certain Documents in Connection with the same; Authorizing the County Administrator to Determine Certain Matters Relating to the Financing;

Providing for the Payment of the Financing and the Disposition of the Financing's Proceeds; and Providing for other Related Matters

10. Financial Report

Mr. Lynden Anthony, CFO, began his report by stating the following:

- **The General Fund** had Expenditures of \$2,024,756 and Revenue was not available as of May 31, 2023.
- **Weldon Auditorium** had Revenue of \$29,455 for the month ending May 31, 2023 and total Expenses were \$138,460. He stated that the Weldon Auditorium ended the month of May, 2023 after transfers with a deficit of \$14,005.
- **Water and Sewer Department** had total Revenue of \$1,333,353 for the month ending May 31, 2023 and total Expenses were \$717,955. After Depreciation, Bond Interest Expense, Interest income and Grant Revenue, the Water and Sewer Department ended the month ending May 31, 2023 with a Net Utility Income of \$1,678,236.
- **The C-Fund Program** - for the month ending May 31, 2023, The C-Fund program had a Cash Balance of \$6,522,014 of which \$1,711,270 has been committed to remaining local paving projects, State Construction Projects in Progress and State Proviso Funds. He stated that the C-Fund Program had an Uncommitted Balance of \$4,810,744 as of the end of May, 2023.

11. Administrator's Report

Administrator Epperson began his report by giving Council an update on the following:

✓ **Water and Sewer**

Wyboo Wastewater Treatment Plant Diversion Project – Directional Bores and Pumpstation work continues. Completion is expected by December 2023. We are excited about the growth potential this will bring to the HWY 260 corridor.

✓ **Facilities:**

Project Clarendon (911/EOC Center, Turbeville Fire Station, Public Works Facility, Fleet Maintenance Facility, and Law Enforcement Annex (animal control):

Due diligence work on the Public Works, Fleet Maintenance, and Animal Control Facilities tract as well as E911/EECO and Turbeville Fire Station sites has begun.

Turbeville Library – design is moving along well, and site work should begin soon. We anticipate having detailed site plans and cost estimates near the end of summer so plans can be finalized.

✓ **Miscellaneous:**

The Recreation Department's Baseball and Softball season have ended. All-Star Teams have been picked and are currently practicing. These tournaments are scheduled to begin within the next 2 weeks. We wish these teams well in their tournaments.

The Recreation Department is currently offering pickleball at the Clarendon Community Center (Gym) behind Weldon Auditorium. It will also be offering volleyball and other activities during the Summer. If anyone is interested in our activities or facility rentals, please contact the Clarendon County Recreation Department for more information.

Duke Energy is offering "Power Hours" on Tuesday, June 27 from 9-11 am at Manning City Hall where citizens can come and discuss any power bill issues with a Duke Energy representative.

The Clarendon County Emergency Management Office recently received a grant from Duke Energy in the amount of \$17,000 to purchase a Plum Case. A plum chase is a mobile broadband device that will provide high-speed data services using cellular signal. This tool will assist in keeping critical services operational during disasters and other times when broadband service fails. This device will be dedicated to our 911 center to maintain operations during broadband failures.

County Council offices will be closed on Monday, June 19, 2023, for Juneteenth and July 4, 2023 in Observance of Independence Day.

12. Chairman's Report

Chairman Stewart stated that the Scott's Branch High School located on 1102 4th Street in Summerton, SC has been entered into the National Register of Historic Places as of May 24, 2023. He encourages everyone to stop by and see the historical marker in front of the school.

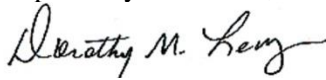
13. Adjourn

Chairman Stewart stated that we have exhausted our agenda and he asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular County Council meeting.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to adjourn the Regular Scheduled Council Meeting.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dorothy M. Levy
Clerk to Clarendon County Council, CCC

