

Clarendon County Regular Council Meeting

Monday, February 12, 2024

6:00 PM

Council Chambers, 411 Sunset Drive, Manning, SC 29102

Those in attendance:

Chairman Dwight L. Stewart, Jr.
Councilman Billy G. Richardson
Interim Administrator Lynden Anthony

Vice Chairman W. J. Frierson, Sr.
Councilman John P. Coker
Clerk to Council, Dorothy M. Levy

Absent: Councilman A.C. English, Deputy Administrator Sharmane Anderson

Press in attendance: Ashley Miller, The Item

Others in attendance included:

Johnny K. Wilson	Kenneth Smythe	Carol Blanding	Zion Wilson	Elaine Wood
Tonya Byrd	Suzanne Failmezger	Meredith Keller	Roger Jowers	George Frierson
Jean Keller	Shannon Osteen	Joseph Osteen	Troy Allan	Shannon Allan
Jason Osteen	LeGette Flowers	Robert Sandifer	David Tindal, IV	Patricia Pringle
Rose Infinger	Gavin Allan	Chars G. Kennedy	Jacqueline Blackwell	
And Other Clarendon County Residents				

Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm by stating that Councilman English is absent because he is having some health issues. Councilman Richardson led the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

1. Approval of the Agenda

On motion by Councilman Coker and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Agenda for the Regular scheduled Council Meeting for February 12, 2024.

2. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the minutes for the Regular Scheduled Council Meeting which was held on January 8, 2024.

3. . Service Awards

Prior to the business session of the Regular Council Meeting Linda Lemon HR Director, Chairman Stewart, and Interim Administrator Anthony recognized four employees for service awards.

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| • Joseph Jones | 5 years | Tony Brown | 10 years |
| • Ernest Grice | 10 years | Karen Decosta | 10 years |

Chairman Stewart thanked everyone for their service.

4. Public Comments

- Mr. Johnny Wilson presented Council with information on the Annual Juneteenth Celebration which will be held on Saturday, June 15, 2024. He stated that they have been having this community event since 2018. Mr. Wilson stated that this Juneteenth, they want everyone united and not divided. He concluded by asking Council for any funding that they can provide will be greatly appreciated and accounted for.

- Ms. Carol Blanding, CEO and Founder of New Mercies Outreach Ministries, Inc., began by stating that her organization rescues homeless people and people addicted to drugs. She would like to partner with Clarendon County. Ms. Blanding stated that she has a proven track record of success. She continued by stating that when she rescues people addicted to drugs, she takes them to Knoxville, Tennessee because it's free and no cost to anyone. She continued by stating that she is requesting funding to assist with helping the homeless and people addicted to drugs. She started the ministry in 2019 using personal funds and she received funding from local churches and other citizens that helped including Chairman Stewart. She concluded by stating that our children are suffering and any funding that the County can give her will be greatly appreciated and she promises that it will be used to help the homeless and people addicted to drugs.
- Mr. Kenneth Smythe began by stating that he was addicted to crack cocaine for 20 years and with the help of this program, he has been clean, (drug free), for seven years, he has an apartment, and a job. He concluded by stating that Ms. Blanding needs the help because she is doing a good job.
- Mr. George Frierson began by stating that he's a product of education and he speaks at a lot of functions on education. He stated that Briggs verses Elliott started in Clarendon County in 1947 by Mr. Levi Pearson and Mr. Harry Briggs, Sr. Mr. Levi Pearson was born on February 10, 1892 and Mr. Harry Briggs, Jr. was born on February 10, 1941. He concluded by stating that they were recognized and sent tributes on their birthday this pass Saturday, February 10, 2024.

5. Board Appointments

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to reappoint the following members to the Archives Advisory Commission: Sylvia Clark, Jason J. Montgomery, Carole Summers, and Cynthia Mack – Representing District 2, Sherry Stewart Representing District 1, and Robertha Harrison Representing District 3.

6. Presentation from SC Association of Counties – Mr. Van Henson, Director of Risk Management Services.

Mr. Henson began by giving Council information on the Insurance Trust Mod Factor. He stated that Clarendon County came in second place with a mod rate of .57. He continued by stating that the first-place winner had a mod rate of .55 so Clarendon County was very close to the first-place winner. He presented an award, a plaque, to Tammy Rodvansky, Benefits Administrator of Clarendon County.

7. Concurrent Resolution

Interim Administrator Anthony present Council with a Resolution, Adopted by the General Assembly on January 16, 2024, Recognizing the week of January 21-27, 2024 as National Coroner and Medicolegal Death Investigator Week in Honor of the public Service of the South Carolina Coroners' Association, Coroners, Deputy Corners, and Medicolegal Death Investigators.

Chairman Stewart stated that he appreciates everything the Coroner's Office is doing for Clarendon County.

8. Ordinance 2023-08

On motion by Vice Chairman Frierson and Seconded by Councilman Coker, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Third and Final Reading of Ordinance 2023-08 - An Ordinance to Provide for Regulations Relating to the Procurement of Goods and Services by Clarendon County and to Provide for Other Matters related thereto.

9. Ordinance 2023-09

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Councilman Coker, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Third and Final Reading of Ordinance 2023-09 - An Ordinance to Amend Clarendon County

Ordinance No 2023-01, which Approved and Adopted the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget for Clarendon County, South Carolina.

10. Public Hearing – Ordinance 2024-01

An Ordinance Adopting a Three-Month Moratorium on the Acceptance of Applications for Solar/Solar Farm Use, to Provide for an Immediate Effective Date, and To provide for an Extension of Ninety Days Hereto by Further Resolution of Council. He stated that once approved by First Reading, the Moratorium will go into effect immediately and this will stop any new applications going forward.

Chairman Stewart stated that the Public Hearing is now open. The Public Hearing opened at 6:35 pm.

- Interim Administrator Anthony stated with this Ordinance, the Planning Commission cannot accept any more applications for Solar Farms. He stated that the Planning Commission requested a Moratorium so that they can revisit the Unified Development Code wordings on Solar Farms.
- Mr. Moore stated that he rents his land for a solar farm and the rent checks have not bounced. He stated that landowners cannot be denied the opportunity to make money on their land. He stated that a solar farm is a lot quieter than a night club or a racetrack. He continued by stating that Green Energy is not going anywhere, and we need to come up with something like a bond or something to handle clean up and he values concerns from both sides.
- Ms. Shannon Olsten asked who is going to clean up the property and what happens to the property's value. She asked what we are losing, what are the health issues causing to the immune system. What kind of problems will it cause with our well water and will that hurt us.
- Ms. Tonya Byrd stated she sat through a two and a half hours presentation where people are at war overland. There are all kinds of concerns. Farmers hire people to work on the farms, there is dangerous pollution to the water from runoffs. She stated that it costs \$20 to \$30 a pound to dispose of the solar panels and they look terrible when they are no longer in use. She concluded by stating that it's very difficult to convert land back to farmland.
- Ms. Rose Infinger asked what's in it for us. She said that these companies will be gone, and we will be stuck with the clean-up. She stated that Manning is known for Beauty and Hospitality not for solar panels. She continued that Sumter County rejected the Solar Farm because of Shaw Air Force Base. She concluded by stating that Solar Farms destroy our land and our water. It's disturbing and we do not want to destroy Manning.
- Interim Administrator Anthony stated that the Planning Commission will be having a community meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 5:30 pm that will be open to the public if anyone would like to come and voice your opinions.

Chairman Stewart stated that if there were no other comments, the Public Hearing will close. The Public Hearing closed at 7:03 pm.

11. Ordinance 2024-01

On motion by Councilman Coker and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Second Reading of Ordinance 2024-01 - An Ordinance Adopting a Three-Month Moratorium on the Acceptance of Applications for Solar/Solar Farm Use, to Provide for an Immediate Effective Date, and To provide for an Extension of Ninety Days Hereto by Further Resolution of Council.

12. Resolution 2024-01

Interim Administrator Anthony presented Council with Resolution 2024-01 - A Resolution Disclaiming Interest in Harmony Camp Road. He stated that this road is a state-maintained road, and the agreement is that the property will be converted back to the Burgess Family if the road is no longer needed. He continued by stating

that the County has no interest in the road but would like to reserve the right to access “Harmony Camp Road” for emergency service purposes.

On motion by Vice Chairman Frierson and Seconded by Councilman Coker, Council voted Unanimous Approval to Resolution 2024-01- A Resolution Disclaiming Interest in Harmony Camp Road.

13. Financial Report

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

- **The General Fund** had Expenditures of \$15,618,489 and Revenue was not available as of January 31, 2024.
- **Weldon Auditorium** had Revenue of \$29,749 for the month ending January 31, 2024 and total Expenses were \$85,708. He stated that the Weldon Auditorium ended the month of January, 2024 after transfers with a zero balance.
- **Water and Sewer Department** had total Revenue of \$835,896 for the month ending January 31, 2024 and total Expenses were \$642,244. After Depreciation, Bond Interest Expense, Transfers, Interest income and Grant Revenue, the Water and Sewer Department ended the month of January 31, with a Net Utility Income of \$607,998.
- **The C-Fund Program** - for the month ending January 31, 2024, The C-Fund program had a Cash Balance of \$6,869,454 of which \$6,212,214 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 \$657,729 as of the end of January, 2024.

14. Administrator’s Report

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

✓ **Water System**

Wyboo Wastewater Treatment Plant Diversion Project: Project is near completion, and we have started partial flow to Manning Treatment Plant.

Facilities:

EOC/Communication Center: Contract has been awarded to the architectural firm of Rosenblum Coe and project scope for these services is almost fully developed.

Turbeville Fire Station: Contract for design/build services has been awarded to Hawkins and Kolb. We expect work to start shortly.

Public Works, Fleet Maintenance, Animal control: We closed on the property and are nearly ready to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for design/build services.

SCIIP Grant Phase V: We have executed our contract for engineering /design services and work has begun.

Update on Weldon Auditorium Renovations: Currently expect that design and specifications will be completed and bid packages ready in early May.

Other:

Palmetto Trails Foundation: Work continues on the Lake Marion Trailhead project at the foot of the old SR301 bridge.

Turbeville Library: I have been told that we have our commitments for funding and expect to receive hard copies soon.

North Shore Summerton Development Project: Potential sites for the lift station have been identified and engineering design has begun.

✓ **Recreation:**

- We continue to have Basketball games throughout the week.
- Baseball and softball registration is ongoing until February 16th.
- January was a very busy month for Weldon Auditorium.

✓ **Planning Department:**

The Planning Department will be hosting a Community Input session this Thursday evening here in the Council Chambers at 5:30 on the subject of Solar Farms. Input will be sought on several in relations to Solar Panel.

✓ **County Holiday:**

The County Offices – will be closed on Monday, February 19, 2024, in observance of President's Day.

✓ **The Town of Turbeville:**

The Town of Turbeville has requested that we look into the possibility of providing additional services; specifically, code enforcement and ordinance violations. We provide law enforcement services via a contract and recently started proving build permits and inspections. While the Town has requested that we not charge for these added services; staff are looking into the anticipated resources needed.

✓ **Council Meetings:**

Historically, we have had our regularly scheduled March Council meeting in Turbeville, will that be the choice again?

- Chairman Stewart asked what was the will of Council?
 - Councilman Coker stated that he has no objections to having the March's meeting in Manning since we do not have a place in Turbeville to have the meeting this year.
 - Vice Chairman Frierson stated that he has no objections to having the March's meeting here at the Council Chambers.
 - Councilman Richardson stated that since we are set up for Facebook and we have quite a few followers, we should have the March's meeting here so the followers can still follow the meeting.
- Chairman Stewart stated that since there are no objections, the March meeting will be held in Manning in the Council Chambers this year and we will take it meeting by meeting.

15. Chairman's Report

Chairman Stewart stated that we have hired a search firm to fill the position for a new Administrator. He stated that he wants to thank Lynden Anthony for all of the work he had done wearing two and three hats. He continued by thanking all staff for filling in and he welcomed Mr. Johnson as the County Attorney.

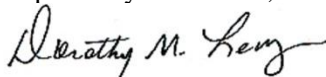
16. Adjourn

Chairman Stewart stated that we had exhausted our agenda, and he asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular Council Meeting.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Councilman Coker, Council voted Unanimous Approval to adjourn the Regular Council Meeting.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dorothy M. Levy
Clerk to Clarendon County Council, CCC