



**JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
Jasper County Clementa C. Pinckney
Government Bldg., 358 Third Avenue
Ridgeland, SC 29936
December 3, 2018
MINUTES**

Officials Present: Chairman D. Thomas Johnson, Vice Chairwoman Barbara Clark, Councilman L. Martin Sauls, IV, Councilman Henry Etheridge and Councilman Greg Altizer

Meeting Called to Order by Chairman Johnson at approximately 4:00 P.M.

Councilman Etheridge moved and Councilwoman Clark seconds the Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss the items listed on the Agenda. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting.

Executive Session

Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by a public body – Section 30-4-70(a)(5) – Jasper Ocean Terminal (JOT)

Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body; however, if an adversary hearing involving the employee or client is held, the employee or client has the right to demand that the hearing be conducted publicly. Nothing contained in this item shall prevent the public body, in its discretion, from deleting the names of the other employees or clients whose records are submitted for use at the hearing. – Section 30-4-70(a)(1) - Clerk to Council

Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contract arrangements and proposed purchase or sale of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice related to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim – Section 30-4-70(a)(2) – JARM, Election Protest, Fire Protection

Councilman Altizer moved and Councilwoman Clark seconds the Motion to return to Open Session. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting.

Return to Open Session in Council Chambers at approximately 6:40 P.M.

Staff Present: Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Attorney David Tedder, Director of Administrative Services Kim Burgess, Fire Chief Frank Edwards, Director of Planning and Building Lisa Wagner, Bonnie Lawson, Coordinator of Planning and Zoning/Acting Clerk to Council

Chairman Johnson asked if any matters are being brought forward out of Executive Session.

Councilman Etheridge moved and Councilwoman Clark seconds the Motion to instruct the County Attorneys to refrain from filing the lawsuit against the South Carolina Port Authority until we have another Council Meeting. The Motion passes with majority of the Councilmembers present voting in favor and the Chairman voting nay.

Chairman Johnsons asks for further business coming out of Executive Session. No other matter brought forward.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Etheridge.

Invocation given by Councilman Altizer.

Approval of Agenda

Councilwoman Clark moved and Councilman Etheridge seconds the Motion approving the Agenda as presented. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting.

Approval of the Minutes – November 19, 2018

Councilwoman Clark moved and Councilman Etheridge seconds the Motion approving the Minutes for November 19, 2018, as presented. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting.

Presentations and Proclamations – None

Open Floor to the Public per Ordinance 08-17 any citizen of the County may sign to speak before the Council on matters pertaining to County Services and Operations. Presentations will be limited to three (3) minutes and total public input will be limited to 30 minutes.

John Kemp of Hardeeville wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. He asked the County to consider changing a little bit. While the Port is important, there are other things that are also very important such as the property of Jasper County needing to be repaired and have continued preventative maintenance. Coosawhatchie, Pineland, Levy, Grays and Gillisonville election polling places need repair and preventative maintenance. He requests the County to set aside some time and money to make it a priority to repair and have preventative maintenance

Reverend Thomas McClary spoke regarding the renaming of the Wagon Branch Community Center, which he believes has caused division and contention in the community. He gave a brief history of the Center, stating the people in the County and the area worked hard raising funds trying to get the things done because we wanted to make things better. We wanted to build a center a place that children could have recreation. He saw in the old minutes that there was a committee but the County did not send out information as to who would be there or whether we could give input or not you, and a renaming should have the consensus of the community. No one came to the Churches out there, no one said anything about it and we could not be here to argue against it. The Wagon Branch - Tillman area came as a whole to work hard and raise money to get that and to name something after certain people and omit others was not right. I hope that you in the future you would think twice about naming a building after

someone who has nothing to do with it. That is why the when we named it the Wagon Branch Community Center, we didn't mention a person's name. He asked the Council to consider the people of the area before naming a building or you will tear that community up.

Chairman Johnson thanked Reverend McClary for his comments and asked Mr. Fulghum to put it on an agenda sometime in the new year to review that policy when we are not covered up with more pressing issues. He adds that naming has given him more heartburn than any other thing that Council has done.

Ms. Rabino, the Career Specialist at Ridgeland High School, stated the Ridgeland High School Government Class, Ms. Foreman, Administrator Anderson and Principal Jackson are in attendance at tonight's Council Meeting to see local government in action. She said the students are ninth through twelfth graders studying the jobs available and how the government works. They look forward to attending future meetings of the County Council.

Chairman Johnson thanked her and then provided a brief description of the Administrative Form of Government which Jasper County uses and how it works. In doing so he acknowledges the County Administrator, County Attorney and the Hardeeville City Council in the audience and gives a brief description regarding the correlation of working together. He shares that Rev. McClary was Council Chairman and also his mentor when he served as the County Attorney. He stated he is very proud that the students are taking an interest in government and he hopes that he can look over there and see who will be sitting as Council one day.

Elizabeth Buckner signed up to speak and she declined adding that Reverend McClary expressed her concerns.

Dennis Beach spoke on behalf of Debora Butler on the third request seeking help from the Council getting blighted areas cleaned up. He said that Savannah, Charleston, Colleton are also having these issues and he spoke with some of these entities. What they are telling him is that we need to get a Code Enforcement Officer. He understands that everybody is stretched thin. He has spoken with Ms. Wagner and there is only so much they can do. They can send letters and try to stay behind them but they really need to stay behind them and do this every day. If there is any way we can get a Code Enforcement Officer we would appreciate it.

Resolutions - None

Ordinances - None

New Business

Frank Edwards – Professional Services Proposal – ISO Consultant

Chief Edwards seeks consideration and approval to hire a consultant to do a report for use in working to improve the County's Insurance Services Organization (ISO) Fire Rating Status. The Consultants will also work with the ISO Group to do benchmarking with other localities so we get a sense of like size jurisdictions and how we fall in the various criteria, such as staffing or number of stations or whatever it might be for the unincorporated County areas. This proposal also includes adding in the two new contract locations and what impact that might have on our ISO criteria. Chairman Johnson asked if it include just generalized or the most cost-effective things we can do. Chief Edwards responded to saying

it will give us low cost, moderate and high cost options to make improvements to the system. Chairman Johnson and Councilman Etheridge asked if this will give us information that will improve ISO Ratings. Chief Edwards responded they will give recommendations concerning improvements. They will talk about where we currently stand and what we can do with low, moderate and high cost to make improvements.

Councilwoman Clark moved and Councilman Etheridge seconds the Motion approving the recommendation to hire Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) in the amount of \$16,005 as presented. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting.

Andrew Fulghum – Recommendation of Appointments to Grievance Committee

Mr. Fulghum said the Code of Laws for South Carolina, specifically the Grievance Procedure Act, requires that the County have procedures in place to resolve employee complaints. The County's Grievance Policy is included in County's Policy and Procedure Manual, which establishes a Grievance Committee of employees. The County Council appoints those employees to the Grievance Committee. The Memo provided recommends five members and two alternates for the Committee. Those recommendations represent a fair cross section of employees with particular attention to gender, race, work location and job classification. Most importantly, all have agreed to serve. He requests the Council consider appointing the recommended employees named in the Memo to the Grievance Committee.

Councilwoman Clark moved and Councilman Altizer seconds the Motion appointing the recommended employees and the two alternates named in Mr. Fulghum's Memo to serve on the Grievance Committee. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting.

Andrew Fulghum- Professional Services Proposal from Holt Consulting Company for Phase 3 Construction Services – Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport Expansion Project

Mr. Fulghum presents Work Authorization Number 14 between Jasper County and Holt Construction Company for Phase 3A Construction Services of the Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport Expansion Project for regarding Phase 3A as shown on the phasing plan. Phases 1 and 2 have been completed. We are moving into Phase 3; as you may recall Phase 3 had been broken down into two parts because of the funding cycle for the Airport. This is Phase 3A which will conclude with 4200 linear feet in total runway length, and the connection with the old runway facilities. The entire scope of money for the work is proposed not to exceed an amount of \$264,075; again this is grant eligible, ninety percent Federal and we are hoping the State will pitch in their five percent. If that is the case, then the County would only be responsible for \$13,204 of that. He is respectfully requesting Council to approve Work Authorization Number 14 so we can get the Phase 3A started on the Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport Expansion Project.

Councilwoman Clark moved and Councilman Altizer seconds the Motion approving the recommendation for Work Authorization Number 14, not to exceed an amount of \$264,075 for Phase 3A of the Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport Expansion Project. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting.

Old Business

Lisa Wagner – Update on Code Enforcement Issues – Purrysburg Area

Ms. Wagner said as part of the Community Development Block Grant for the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan on Stiney and Church Road, just over thirty structures were identified for demolition

as these structures are dilapidated, unsafe and inhabitable and they are creating blight in the community. There are eighteen remaining property owners who have not signed a release form to grant the County permission to demolish the structures and this requires issuing citations through Jasper County's Nuisance Ordinance. Citations must be issued by Certified Mail because these houses are not be occupied and some of the property owners do not reside in Jasper County. This week we will prepare the eighteen citations then send by Certified Mail so we can receive the returned signed green cards, in order to show the Magistrate that we have followed the proper procedure. Court is scheduled in January 2019, of course our goal is to have the release form signed so we can take down the structures. We posted bright green notices along Church Road notifying the public of the cleanup efforts that are underway by Jasper County. We focused on the properties that need to be demolished for the ones that we need signatures so it went beyond Church Road so it extended beyond Stiney Road, Sanders Road, School Cut Road and Jackson Loop. We also took Code Enforcement Action on two properties on Church Road that probably were in the worse condition. She put photos on the screen and gave brief information. One yard had nine cars without current license plates in the yard. This photo shows where three of the nine cars have been removed, but a straw trailer has been added since the first visit. One yard and porch were previously full of litter, debris and refuse, she shows were quite a bit of work was done to improve it, adding that more cleanup is needed. The Public Works' Department is responsible for the pick-up sixty-eight bags of trash along the road. Next, she showed the four mobile homes that Ms. Butler spoke about at a previous Council meeting saying that the mobile home with the damage from the tree is now being repaired; another mobile home looks a lot better than it did when it first arrived, it is being spruced up; and another mobile home image shows that worked is being done on it as well. She said we are continuing to work on that and she took pictures along Church Road and shared where people are raking their yard. We don't receive many complaints about but what really doesn't look good is the mobile home park area. Those homes have been there the longest and they have no definition to them; there is no landscaping and no greenspace. It is just not an area that looks good; the mobile homes are old; they are very close together; and no community facilities. Next is a house we posted for demolishing it has no electric meter is overgrown with vines. The last time we were there it looked like the State had mowed the property and Public Works has already picked up the trash so the right-of-way's look really good.

Chairman Johnson asked the demolition that you propose is that covered by the JEDA or the CDBG Grant. Ms. Wagner responds that is right, the Community Development Block Grant and that is a slow process as you know, we were awarded that a year ago. The South Carolina Commerce Department has so many steps required in satisfying the Grant. We had the wetlands delineated and it was sent off to the Army Corp of Engineers in an effort to receive a determination letter. They wrote us back and said each wetland needs to be surveyed and identified for size and impact so as you remember the meeting before last you approved for TGS Land Surveying to do this. I have not received that survey yet, but I am sure he is working on it.

Councilman Etheridge asked if we have to wait to get the other eighteen approved before we start removing the twelve houses. Ms. Wagner responds we are going to be required to submit bids and it will save a lot of time and money if it is not done in piecemeal fashion. Court action next month regarding the twelve unreleased houses is expected. We must have the structures released before we can bid the project, and someone will need to identify whether or not these houses have asbestos prior to bidding out the project for demolition.

Chairman Johnson asked if Dale Terry at Public Works would be able to demolish the houses. Ms. Wagner responds that unfortunately, the Grant does not work that way.

Chairman Johnson thanks Ms. Wagner and said he is certain that she has been in contact with Ms. Butler and Mr. Beach. Ms. Wagner responded that she has been in contact with Ms. Butler but she would like to have Mr. Beach's email address.

Council Members Comments

Vice Chairwoman Clark said she attended the South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC) training in Charleston last week and the Legislative Conference in Columbia. She serves on the Land Use Committee and we are there giving our input as to how we want our land used, but not necessarily all of the recommendations are taken. One that we are fighting over for years is solid waste. We are still dealing with solid waste issues; asking for our monies that we don't get from the State. They are also pursuing measures to assist with dilapidated buildings. We are hoping that the State is going to put some teeth into some of these ordinances. She stated that in Jasper County it is clear many need to clean up around your place. It is an eye. We've got to get something going it is just not right; I saw a house on Purrysburg Road about eight months ago that had trash stacked on the front porch to the ceiling. I am talking about garbage so you can imagine how it smelled around there. She is happy to see our Government Class here. She is the liaison for education and she told Mr. Jackson to contact Mr. Fulghum and put them on the Agenda and she hopes that they have learned something tonight. Feel free to call anyone of us if you have questions Mr. Fulghum and Mr. Tedder included. She would like to hear back from them what they really learned tonight challenging each student to send her a brief paragraph. She said she would share with the Council. She concurs with Ms. Rabino hoping this is not their last time attending these meetings and we look forward to seeing you again. She concludes by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas.

Councilman Altizer said this past Sunday he started 47 years of continual ministry in the Church. Twenty-eight days from now he will be retiring from the County Council. The thanked everyone for all that he has learned and for the friendships he has made.

Councilman Etheridge said it has been raining and guess what when it rains the phone rings. Everybody's got some problems, mud holes and asphalt popping out of the road again and every time it rains on Highway 278, it is the same potholes coming back. That is a State Road and I have called and called and called the State. Hopefully we are going to get a lot more done now that we are getting a little more sales tax from gasoline. In fact, we can see the improvement with the work that is being done on the highways. I am on the EOC Community Partnership which serves the people in poverty, poor people and the elderly. We have two new girls in our office in Jasper County, which is located right by the Election Commission office, behind the old hospital. We have applied for a grant for some more services in Jasper and Beaufort County. Hopefully it will go into effect next year. He wants to pass the word that if you know someone that needs help please send them to that office. Also, the Headstart Program in Jasper County does not have anyone on the waiting list, but in Beaufort County they have sixty-eight people on the waiting list. Either people don't need it or we are not doing a good job letting people know it is available. Early Headstart goes to age three and Headstart is four and five year olds. If you need those services please apply. He had two good days of training with the SC Association of Counties. Councilwoman Clark, Councilman Etheridge and Administrator Anderson concur with the benefits of the Headstart program and the importance making all parents aware and getting all children to attend.

Chairman Johnson said he has been trying to work with the Town of Hardeeville to address some concerns they have. As always he is continuing to work on the Port; we are still plugging along and I

think we are still making progress. In terms of comments just in this small room I see a number of people that deserve to have something named after them. We have more good people than we have things to name and perhaps the whole idea of naming things is a bad idea and I know it would make County Council's job a lot easier if we just stuck with one word, jail, courthouse, voter registration. You could save a lot on signs, and committees and a lot of other things and if that is the will of the people that would certainly simplify a lot of things. I can only think of the old saying that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. I think that everybody has good intentions but we make mistakes. Councilman Etheridge concurs. We have a policy of naming things after deceased persons and I am grateful to see that Mr. Snead and Mr. McClary aren't eligible to have anything named after them yet and I hope you are not eligible for a long time. I feel very sincere that there are a lot of people in the room just for starters that truly deserve recognition and we will have to build a lot more buildings if we are going to name one after everybody that deserves it.

Councilman Etheridge noted that we did follow protocol just like it was written and I am going back to see if Mr. McClary or Mr. Snead might have helped write that Resolution regarding naming buildings that we went by.

Chairman Johnson said there is a legitimate problem when you notify the public by putting something in the newspaper because many people do not get it or do not read the fine print. If you put up a little sign somebody blows past it at 65 miles per hour and they say well it looks like poor old John didn't pay his taxes and they don't realize it says a hearing on naming something or rezoning and I don't know the answer. Some people say that is because I am old and I don't know the internet enough to answer that, but if anybody has a suggestion how to get the word out better they are welcome to make it, or on anything else that you may want to make a suggestion on. We might not act on it but we will consider it.

Administrator's Report

Mr. Fulghum said he has one item on his report requiring your consideration. At a recent meeting you adopted a Resolution declaring 16 vehicles from the Sheriff's Department as surplus. They have been sold yielding \$28, 282. The Sheriff's Office would like to use those funds to purchase one new Dodge Charger.

Councilman Etheridge moved and Councilwoman Clark seconds the Motion to approve the Sheriff's Office using the surplus fund of \$28, 282 to purchase one new Dodge Charger. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting.

The Chairman asked Vice Chairwoman Clark if he is forgetting anything. Council would like to acknowledge Dr. Singleton one of the founders of Polaris Tech who is in attending tonight's meeting. Chairman Johnson expressed that if they did not call your name that does not mean you are not important and that does not mean that we don't look up to you. That just means that we have only got just so much time.

Adjourn Councilwoman Clark moved and Councilman Altizer seconds the Motion to adjourn. The Motion passes with all Councilmembers present voting.

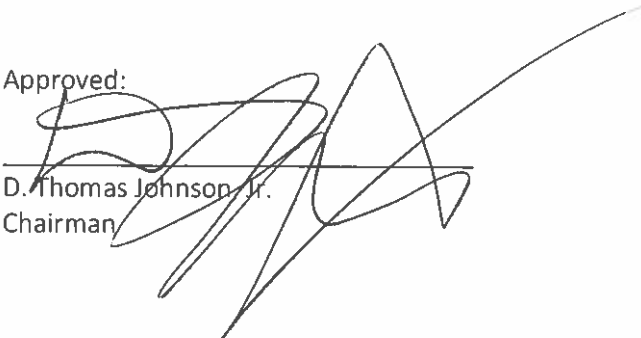
Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:43 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:



Bonnie Lawson
Acting Clerk to Council

Approved:



D. Thomas Johnson, Jr.
Chairman