

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

October 1, 2019

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

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The Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P. M. Tuesday, October 1, 2019 in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield, SC. Notice of this meeting was provided to Edgefielddaily.com, The Edgefield Advertiser and others as requested.

Members present

Scott Cooper, Chairman
Albert Talbert, Vice Chairman
Arthur Biggs, Councilman
Dean Campbell, Councilman
Dr. Jacqueline Kennion, Councilwoman

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Others present

Tommy Paradise, County Administrator
Bruce Cooley, Assistant Administrator/Finance Director
Andrew Marine, County Attorney
Jennifer Gilley, Clerk to Council
and others as per list attached

Chairman Cooper called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by Pastor Bruce Cooley. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was then recited.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the October 1, 2019 agenda was made by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the September 3, 2019 County Council minutes (Regular Meeting of Council) was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilman Biggs. Motion passed unanimously.

Guest Speakers

Grant Davis, CPA Mauldin and Jenkins presented Edgefield County with the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association. He said this award shows a significant effort that is not required.

Comments from the Public

1. Sam Crouch – Mr. Crouch spoke regarding the widening of Bettis Academy Road. He explained that he serves on the County Transportation Committee (CTC) and that he believes this project is very important. He said the Augusta Regional Transportation Study (ARTS) Board and the Upper Savannah Council of Governments (USCOG) are asking for this study to be completed and this will require additional funding. He noted this will need to be a group effort due to the size of the project and also said that he is in favor of the business item later on the agenda regarding this project. (New Business Item #5) – “Consideration of Approval to Authorize the County Administrator to spend up to \$8,000 as a match for a Feasibility Study for Bettis Academy Road.”

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Reports

There were no questions nor discussion on the reports.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Cooper asked Council if there were any items that needed to be removed from the Consent Agenda to allow discussion. There were none. Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented was made by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.

- 1. Consideration of appointment to the Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board.
Theresa Stover3 Year Term
- 2. Consideration of appointment to Planning Commission.
Buddy SmithDistrict 3

Consent Agenda Ends Here

Public Hearing

- 1. Public Hearing on Ordinance Number 19-20-764, "An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 24 of the Edgefield County Land Development Ordinance."
 - 1. Linda Anderson – Mrs. Anderson asked what the fees are of the counties that staff used as comparisons. Mr. Paradise said the fees Edgefield County has start at a minimum of \$1,000. He went on to say that surrounding counties have a maximum cap of \$1,000 to \$1,500. He gave an example of an actual application that came into Edgefield County. He said the fee totaled \$18,000 due to the acreage. He said if the developer goes to a neighboring county they would be paying approximately \$1,200. Mrs. Anderson then asked what the difference was in a regular subdivision versus a planned development. Mr. Paradise said that a regular subdivision goes straight to the Planning Commission and moves forward with their project while a Planned Development has to go to Planning Commission and County Council for approval. He said the county has more control over a Planned Development.

Old Business

- 1. Consideration of Approval of Second Reading of Ordinance Number 19-20-764, "An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 24 of the Edgefield County Land Development Ordinance."
Chairman Cooper asked Mr. Paradise if anything had changed with this ordinance. Mr. Paradise said nothing had changed in this ordinance. There was no discussion.
Motion to approve second reading of ordinance number 19-20-764 was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously.
- 2. Consideration of Approval of Final Design of Gateway Signage.
There were no questions nor discussion on this item of business.
Motion to approve the final design of the gateway signage as presented in the agenda packet was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilman Biggs. Motion passed unanimously.

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New Business

1. Consideration of Approval to Authorize the Purchase of three (3) Zoll X Series Manual Monitors/Defibrillators.

Company Name and Address	Bid Amount
Master Medical Equipment 2345 F. E. Wright Drive Jackson, TN 38305	\$75,285.00
Zoll Medical 269 Mill Road Chelmsford, MA 01824	\$105,940.16 \$90,940.16 with Trade-In

Mr. Paradise told Council that EMS staff has been informed that the current Zoll heart monitor's will not be serviceable after January 1, 2020. He said staff recommends purchasing 3 new Zoll X Series Heart Monitors for \$90,940.16 to replace the outdated monitors. He went on to say this will allow new monitors over the refurbished monitors contained in the lower bid. He also noted that in addition, Zoll will provide a credit on our existing 3 monitors for \$5,000 each (\$15,000 total). EMS will only have \$20,000 due this budget year and the remainder in FY 2020-21. Mr. Paradise said this payment deferral will allow the unanticipated expense to more easily be absorbed within the budget.

Councilman Campbell asked if the bid package asked for refurbished versus new equipment. Mr. Paradise said the bid requested new equipment. Councilman Campbell asked if this should be considered a non-compliant bid. Mr. Paradise said yes it could be considered non-compliant. Councilman Campbell also noted this could be considered a sole source justification since no other company would be able to offer the Zoll brand equipment. Councilman Biggs agreed.

Motion to approve the authorization of the purchase of three (3) Zoll X Series Manual Monitors/Defibrillators from Zoll Medical in the amount of \$90,940.16 with the trade-in was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of Approval of amending the Development Agreement for Windsor subdivision.
Mr. Paradise told Council the developer of Windsor subdivision would like to amend paragraph Number 11 of the Developer's Agreement approved by Council on August 12, 2019. The change presented clarifies when the letter of credit should be provided. Mr. Paradise explained the letter of credit is tied to the development financing and will not be available until the development plans are complete. He also noted the changes provide clarification on when the letter of credit will be released. Motion to approve the amendment of the development agreement for Windsor Subdivision as presented was made by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilman Biggs. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Consideration of Approval to Purchase vehicles for the Sheriff's Office from the Vehicle Bond.

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Mr. Paradise told Council that in the FY 2019-2020 budget the Sheriff's Office requested three new marked vehicles and two investigator vehicles with three marked vehicles and one investigator vehicle being recommended. County Council deferred the request for the purchase of Sheriff's Office vehicles to be paid for out of the Vehicle Bond. He said the Sheriff's Office is requesting funding from the Vehicle Bond for the purchase of three marked vehicles at \$46,000 each and one investigator vehicle for \$22,000 bringing the total request to \$160,000. Mr. Paradise noted the Vehicle Bond has an available balance of \$235,364.31, which would leave a balance of \$75,364.31, if approved.

Councilman Talbert asked the mileage of each of the vehicles being retired from the fleet. Captain Wash stated all were approximately 200,000 miles. Councilman Biggs asked if the prices of the vehicles increased from last year. Captain Wash said that Councilman Biggs was correct. He explained that Ford has restyled the Explorers and that caused an increase of approximately \$5,000 per vehicle. Councilman Biggs asked if this price included all of the additional equipment that would be required. Captain Wash said this would be the final price with lights and all additional equipment. Motion to approve the purchase of vehicles for the Sheriff's Office from the vehicle bond was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Consideration of Approval to Authorize the County Administrator to hire off-duty Sheriff's Deputies to check County Residency Status at Convenience Centers.

Chairman Cooper said he has received complaints from attendants at the convenience centers concerning out of county residents using the centers. Mr. Paradise said the attendants have attempted to police this activity, but citizens have been uncooperative and the attendants have been concerned about their safety. He said this proposal would allow the Administrator to randomly hire deputies to police this activity. Funding for this project would come from the Solid Waste Contingency Account. Mr. Paradise went on to say that several things have been brought up since this idea was formed. He noted that while citizens from other counties are coming to Edgefield County, there are probably citizens from Edgefield County going to other counties as well. He also noted that if a citizen gets turned away, they may dump the trash along one of the roadways. Mr. Paradise said he started off thinking this was a simple issue but quickly realized this is a more complex issue.

Councilman Campbell said the county currently has an agreement with McCormick County for Edgefield and McCormick County residents to use the convenience center on Hwy 378. He suggested staff look into this type of agreement with all of the surrounding counties where a county line is close to a convenience center. Councilman Campbell also said hiring an off duty deputy could become costly to the county and in turn the taxpayers. Councilman Biggs agreed and said that he would like for the attendants to try and keep track of how many citizens from other counties are using the convenience centers. He said once the information is available, staff may have better ideas to stop this issue.

This item of business died due to the lack of a motion.

5. Consideration of Approval to Authorize the County Administrator to spend up to \$8,000 as a match for a Feasibility Study for Bettis Academy Road.

Mr. Paradise said Edgefield County has the widening of Bettis Academy Road from Hwy 25 to the widened portion in Aiken County as part of Edgefield County's Strategic Plan. He said this project has been included in the ARTS Long-Range Transportation Plan in combination with a study of the Bettis Academy Road from Hwy 25 to Ascauga Lake Road in Aiken County. He explained the first

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step in this process is for a feasibility study to be conducted. ARTS has authorized the funding of a corridor feasibility study for Bettis Road from Hwy 25 to Ascauga Lake Road in Aiken County. Mr. Paradise told Council the study is estimated to cost no more than \$200,000 and requires a 20% match. Edgefield County's portion of the match is \$15,000. The County Transportation Committee has authorized \$7,000 toward the match. He said he is asking for the additional \$8,000 from Edgefield County is needed to fund the match.

Councilman Campbell asked which line item would fund this request. Mr. Paradise said it would come from the Professional Services Account in the County Administrator's budget.

Motion to approve the authorization of the County Administrator to spend up to \$8,000 as a match for a Feasibility Study for Bettis Academy Road was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Consideration of Approval to Authorize the County Administrator to list the property and improvements located at 400 Church Street in Edgefield, also known as the Neighborhood Center, for sale on GovDeals for a minimum purchase price of \$50,000.

Mr. Paradise told Council the Neighborhood Center has been vacant since April 2018. He said staff has discussed the purchase of the building to several area groups but none have moved forward with an offer to purchase the building. Mr. Paradise explained GovDeals is an online auction of surplus government items that staff utilized to sale other surplus county property. Mr. Paradise said staff is requesting Council to approve the request for staff to list this real estate for sale on GovDeals with a minimum purchase price of \$50,000. He explained staff believes this will allow for a wider range of prospects to view the property.

Councilwoman Kennion asked where this property is located. Mr. Paradise said it was the old school building next to the Town Gym. Councilman Biggs asked if staff had gotten a value for the property. Mr. Paradise said Gerry Coleman, Tax Assessor, has determined a property value of \$60,000.

Councilman Biggs asked if there was a cost to list the property on GovDeals. Mr. Paradise said there is a fee that is associated with GovDeals but that it is paid by the bidder. Ms. Gilley said the fee is a maximum of 7.5%. Ms. Gilley also told Council that GovDeals has the ability to accept a bid lower than the minimum purchase price if no one enters a bid that at least matches the reserve. She explained that staff would be able to accept or deny a bid that comes in lower. For example, if the minimum bid/reserve is \$50,000 and someone bids \$48,000 (and there are no other higher bids) the county could choose to accept or deny that bid.

Motion to approve the authorization of the County Administrator to list the property and improvements located at 400 Church Street in Edgefield, also known as the Neighborhood Center, for sale on GovDeals for a minimum purchase price of \$50,000 was made by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilman Biggs. Motion passed unanimously with Councilwoman Kennion abstaining.

7. Consideration of Approval to Authorize a donation of \$100 to the Strom Thurmond Future Farmers of America (FFA).

Mr. Paradise told Council that when planning the August 17th Dixie Youth Baseball (DYB) Celebration for the DYB Champions, staff determined that additional manpower would be needed to provide oversight of the rides and food distribution. He went on to tell Council the Strom Thurmond FFA volunteered to provide that service.

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Councilman Campbell said that while he typically doesn't believe in funding non-profit organizations with tax payer dollars, he does support this donation. He explained the FFA provided a service to the county and that he believes this is a worth-while donation.

Motion to approve the authorization of a donation of \$100 to the Strom Thurmond Future Farmers of America (FFA) was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Chairman Cooper. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Discussion of holding an Edgefield County Council Retreat in November.

Chairman Cooper said he had some prepared comments to start this discussion. He started with the following prepared comments:

It absolutely boggles my mind that today begins the fourth quarter of our calendar year, the second quarter of fiscal year 2020. With the LMO meetings this month, town halls that are scheduled, and all the year end events – this next quarter is going to fly by.

I am not a fan of adding to our calendars, simply to say we had another meeting.

That being said, as we approach the new year, budget season and all that entails will be rapidly upon us. That combined with the tremendous growth our county is facing, and the Land Management Ordinance Project our planning commission is working on, I sincerely would appreciate an opportunity for County Council to meet in a setting where we are not taking any votes, and no decisions have to be made, where we can invest some time simply brainstorming and thinking about the next 12 months and beyond. together.

In my conversations with my peers through out the state, a County Council retreat can be done several ways. It can be anywhere from a four hour session to a 2 day event. It could be held in Council Chambers, or we could decide to go somewhere less informal, more relaxed. Obviously, whatever we decide about such a brainstorming session / retreat, it would be publicized and open to the public.

I am flexible, but here is my suggestion to start the discussion. I would like to propose a four hour afternoon session, to be held in a more relaxed environment, for example The Wild Turkey Federation, and we spend an hour discussing each of these issues:

- *Next Year's Budget, Fiscal Year 2021, which begins July 1, 2020*
- *The Land Management Ordinances our Planning Commission is working on.*
- *Parks / Recreation*
- *Open Discussion*

Obviously we could choose to go longer, and we could choose to add additional topics, but this could wet our appetite, enabling us to brainstorm together, and if we deem it necessary we could do a second retreat after the first of the year, either in January or February. Our Administrator could collect dates from each of us, as it relates to availability, and see what venues might be available for the optimal date.

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What are your thoughts?

Councilman Campbell said he had several comments. He would like for this to be held locally so the citizens could attend, at no cost to the county/taxpayers, and at a time that is best for the citizens to attend. Councilman Campbell said that he also believes this should only be held when all five council members can attend. Councilman Biggs and Councilman Talbert agreed with Councilman Campbell's comments. Councilman Talbert said that he also feels like a meeting like this is necessary with all of large items that are upcoming. Councilwoman Kennion said she likes the idea of a Council Retreat as well. Mr. Paradise asked Council how they would like to schedule the proposed 4 hour session. Councilwoman Kennion said she wouldn't be available on the weekends. Mr. Paradise asked if they would like to schedule from 5-9PM or 6-10PM or if there were other suggestions. Chairman Cooper suggested 3-7PM. Councilman Campbell said that he would rather see 5-9PM so that citizens that work would be able to attend without taking time off of work. Councilman Biggs agreed with the 5-9PM timeframe.

Motion to hold a four hour Edgefield County Council Retreat in November, during the week from 5PM to 9PM when all five Council members can attend was made by Chairman Cooper, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.

Comments from the Public

1. Linda Anderson – Mrs. Anderson invited everyone to the annual Candy Drop hosted by the Trenton Flyers at the Trenton Airport at Noon on October 26, 2019.

County Administrator's Report

Mr. Paradise started his report by telling Council that that Finance Director, Bruce Cooley, has announced that he will retire at the end of the year. Staff will begin advertising the position and hope to have the position filled and trained prior to his departure.

Mr. Paradise then told Council staff has had trouble recruiting CDL drivers or training employees to obtain their CDL. He explained the county has been provided a grant from Piedmont Technical College for a non-CDL driver to receive training. An employee is currently enrolled and the only cost to the County is his salary and travel while attending.

Next, Mr. Paradise said the Safety Committee has received a suggestions that the Road Maintenance vehicles need to be equipped with amber flashing lights. Staff is working to implement this suggestion. Then Mr. Paradise told Council the Voter Registration and Elections office has one of the new voting machines on display in their office. He said it is available to the public so that they can come see how the new voting system will work. It will be available through mid-January 2020.

Mr. Paradise moved forward saying Dominion Energy South Carolina (DESC) is about to begin a construction project in Edgefield County. They plan to rebuild a section of electric transmission line that runs from the Stevens Creek hydro plant up toward Briggs Road within their existing power line rights-of-way. He said the transmission line corridor is about 6.5 miles in length and property owners along the transmission line corridor will receive letters from the company to let them know that work will soon commence on the project.

Mr. Paradise closed his comments by saying the Public Listening meetings for the Land Management Ordinance are scheduled for:

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- **October 15, 2019** (Tuesday) - Public Listening Meeting. 7:00 pm at McKendree United Methodist Church, 565 Highway 378, Edgefield, SC 29824.
- **October 16, 2019** (Wednesday) - Public Listening Meeting. 7:00 pm at Johnston Town Council Chambers, 500 Mims Avenue, Johnston, SC 29832.
- **October 17, 2019** (Thursday) - Public Listening Meeting. 7:00 pm at Sweetwater Community Center, 296 Sweetwater Road, North Augusta, SC 29860.
- **October 21, 2019** (Monday) - Public Listening Meeting. 7:00 pm at Edgefield County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield, SC 29824.

Councilwoman Kennion asked if pay might be a deterrent for the CDL Drivers. Mr. Paradise said that could be part of the issue. He went on to say Council did increase their pay to bring it more comparable to other counties that are similar to Edgefield County but that they still cannot compete with the private sector pay.

Comments by County Council Chair

Chairman Cooper had the following comments:

I want to start by saying thank you to each of you, to include staff and our attorney, for the role you play in making our historic county what it is. I love our county tagline, which is on our recently updated website, which says "It feels different here, because it is different here!" I know for a fact that each of us in elected office, that while we are elected by district, each of us want what is best for the entire county, and I know that our administrative team works hard to execute that vision. For that, I am grateful.

The next two months are going to be very busy. I just want to list everything out for you, knowing that some of these items are optional.

- We will have a hearty agenda at our November Council Meeting, so be prepared for a long meeting.
- We have four LMO Public Listening Meetings in October, which Tommy listed in his report. While it is not obligatory for Council to attend one or more of these, I plan to be at each one, so I can hear first hand what our constituents are saying about these issues. Since they are public meeting, and we are not taking any votes, nor will we be discussing any other issues, Council is permitted to attend as many of these as you would like.
- We have the Annual Piedmont Tech event, which happens to coincide with the Annual Economic Development Partnership meeting on Thursday October 3rd, which each of us were invited to.
- We have the Annual Aiken Electric Co-op event which is Thursday October 17th at 7 PM, which each of us were invited to. This coincides with one of the LMO Meetings.
- We have the South Carolina Association of Counties Institute of Government Classes and Fall Coalition meeting on October 23rd and 24th, which each of us can choose to, or not to participate in.

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- Our Legislative Delegation: Senator Shane Massey, Representative Bill Clyburn and Representative Bill Hixon will host their annual session to hear from all County Leaders on Thursday November 7th. I plan to be there representing Council, and would encourage ya'll to attend as well.
- Some of you have scheduled your own town hall meetings, and
- Finally, we just discussed adding one more item, a retreat to help up plan for the next year.

That's quite a lot. I simply wanted to provide that list to you.

As was mentioned in the Administrators report, our Finance Director Bruce Cooley has made the decision to retire. I simply want to thank you sir for your service to our county, and for your career which includes service to other counties in our region. You have been very helpful to me personally in my transition. I know you are helpful to any council member who seeks information from you, and I want you to know, you will be greatly missed. I know you have three more months, but I thought it was appropriate to say this tonight.

On final item which I want to share with the public, as well as Council is that the ARTS Committee, which stands for the Augusta Regional Transportation Study Committee is soliciting public feedback for the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. I would encourage you to go to www.futuremobility2050.com to see the survey and to see the times and locations of the four public meetings they are offering in October.

Thanks for your time. I hope everyone has a good night.

Council conveyed their thankfulness to the service and commitment Bruce Cooley has provided to Edgefield County.

Councilman Biggs announced his upcoming Town Hall Meetings:

- October 3, 2019 – Mount Vintage Town Center 7PM
- October 7, 2019 – Collier's Community Center 7PM
- October 10, 2019 – Sweetwater Community Center 7 PM

Executive Session

None

Adjourn

Councilman Talbert made the motion to adjourn at 7:16PM, seconded by Chairman Cooper. Motion passed unanimously.

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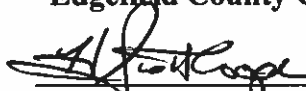
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H. Scott Cooper, Chair

ATTEST



Jennifer L. Gilley, Clerk to Council