

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

June 2, 2020

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

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The Edgefield County Council held their regular meeting at 6:00 PM Tuesday, June 2, 2020. Notice of this meeting was provided to 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
Dana Waters, Finance Director
Andrew Marine, County Attorney
Jennifer Gilley, Clerk to Council

and others were able to watch live on YouTube or can watch a replay at any time.

Chairman Cooper called the meeting to order by stating, "All of our hearts are very heavy after the murder of George Floyd, and the activities which have taken place in the last week. Governor McMaster held a press conference on Sunday May 31st at 1 PM, and a prayer was offered by Chaplain Darden. I would like to open our meeting tonight by reading his prayer. I will then follow with a bible verse.

This was Chaplain Darden's prayer:

"Our father we are so humbled today by your presence, by all you are able to. Even in spite of the unrest and the violence, you are God and beside you there is no other. So we thank you for this day, a day we have never seen before. You are the God of PEACE. And your Son is the Prince of Peace. And so today we pray for peace, in our country, in our nation and in our world. Even though the attack may be a hidden foe, but even in this unrest and in this situation, those things that have attacked us and that have come before us, have shouted that there are some issues that we have got to address. So today, we thank you for what you are able to do. Give us what we need. Give us the wisdom. But in all of our getting, allow us to get an understanding. So that you can be glorified. Violence is not the answer. We understand that rioting is the cry of the unheard. But let us understand that we hear, that you understand and that you can make the difference. This is our prayer today. Change our hearts and our minds, bless us in your name we pray.

The verse that I would like to share is taken from the Beatitudes, from Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons and daughters of God." Help each of us Lord, to be peacemakers, in the spheres of influence you have blessed with. In Jesus name, Amen.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was then recited.

Approval of Agenda

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Motion to amend the agenda by moving New Business Item Number 2 to be taken up between the first comments from the public section and the reports section was made by Chairman Cooper, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Chairman Cooper said this would allow Mr. Davis and Mr. Mace from Moseley Architects to leave a little earlier since they had to make a trip home. This passed unanimously.

Motion to approve the June 2, 2020 agenda as amended, was made by Councilman Talbert, and seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the May 1, 2020 County Council minutes (Called, Virtual Meeting) was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilman Campbell. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve the May 5, 2020 County Council minutes (Regular Meeting of Council) was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously.

Guest Speakers

None

Comments from the Public

None

New Business Item Number 2

1. Presentation regarding the Space Needs Study for an Edgefield County Law Enforcement Center. Chairman Cooper said Council authorized a Space Needs Study to be conducted for the detention center, Sheriff's Office and Magistrate Court by Mosely Architects at their July 2019 meeting. He said Todd Davis and Dan Mace of Mosely Architects will be presenting their report to Council for information purposes.

*See the attachment for the full presentation.

Mr. Davis and Mr. Mace started their presentation by telling Council the following steps they took to gather the information for the study:

- Collected jail confinement data and analyzed findings.
- Interviewed with Sheriff's staff, E911, Magistrate personnel, county administration, and detention center staff.
- Reviewed county population projections.
- Met with the planning committee to discuss data collected and provided status update.
- Produced a long term monthly local jail population forecast.
- Developed space programs for stated needs from the stakeholder process.
- Developed design options based on forecast.
- Developed conceptual budget estimates.

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They covered the average daily population, rated capacity, estimated admissions, and average length of stay. They also reviewed the estimated jail population from the year 2020 to 2040. They explained all of this information helped them determine how the facility would need to be laid out, what the space needs for each department would be and how the facility might need to be able to expand in the future.

Mr. Davis and Mr. Mace reported that with their proposed design the new detention center would include:

- 126 beds/150 bed “core”
- “Radial” design for optimal staff efficiency
- Four 19-bed housing units / One 24-bed dormitory / One 10 bed maximum security unit / Two 8 bed special purpose units
- Video visitation consoles in housing units
- Core spaces include kitchen/laundry, intake/booking, medical, and property storage
- Public lobby, video visitation, and administrative offices
- 40,000 square feet

Mr. Davis and Mr. Mace finished their presentation with a few more details about the proposed design due to information collected during the study and then took questions.

Councilman Biggs asked if it would make a difference to make the design smaller and then add pods over the next 10 years. Mr. Mace told Councilman Biggs that is a possibility but he doesn't think it would be very cost effective and he also thinks that since the current facility is already out of space that would start the facility “behind” so to speak.

Councilman Campbell asked Mr. Mace when he refers to “129 beds or a bed” does 1 bed represent 1 jail cell. Mr. Mace said different housing units are designed differently. He said some inmates cannot be housed with other inmates for security purposes so those beds would be in a single cell but that nonviolent offenders would be housed in more of a dorm type unit with multiple beds in a larger area. He also noted that with the design presented, more pods and beds would be able to be added in the future if needed. Councilman Campbell asked if there is a way to add bed space without adding pods. Mr. Mace said not typically. He did say that with this design it is possible but that 2 units would be non-operational while those changes took place, if this were to be the case in the future. He said you would also be responsible to add an additional shower for each 8 beds that was added as well as day room space. He said they don't recommend this but it could be done, if necessary. He also noted that his response is based on current standards and those could change in the future. Councilman Campbell asked if the recommended 5 acres is a minimum, do they also recommend trying to find a more square or round piece of property to ensure the law enforcement area would be able to extend in all directions. Mr. Mace said that is correct. He explained that if the property were shaped triangle, some areas of the law enforcement center would not be able to be expanded in the future. Councilman Campbell asked if they estimated about 2 years of construction from the day it begins. Mr. Mace agreed that it

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would take about 2 years for the entire process as long as the site was good and the necessary utilities were readily available.

Councilman Campbell asked the Sheriff if he thought this design would really cover the needs as he sees them. He said he wasn't asking the Sheriff to answer tonight, that he could certainly go home and think about it and get back to him, but he wanted his opinion since he runs the Sheriff's Office now and knows more about what is needed. Sheriff Dobey said that he has worked closely with Mosley Architects on this study and he does believe the design as presented would meet the needs. Captain Wash also echoed the Sheriff's comments and agreed that this should meet their needs. He also noted that with this design it would allow for less staff to run the facility in a safe manner which would be a tremendous help since they are currently understaffed. Councilman Campbell asked if there is a Magistrate Courtroom in the design. Mr. Mace said there is one included and it was brought up and displayed on the PowerPoint presentation.

Councilman Campbell asked Mr. Paradise what is left in the contract between Mosely Architects and Edgefield County Government. Mr. Paradise said this has fulfilled the contract. Mr. Mace said they would be happy to test any pieces of property that the County has in mind before committing to a piece of property.

Reports.

There was no discussion nor questions on the reports.

Consent Agenda

None

Public Hearing

1. Public Hearing of Ordinance Number 19-20-768, "An Ordinance Providing for the FY 2020-2021 General Operating Budget and Establishing Ancillary Budgets for Debt Service, E-911 Administration, Industrial Park, Solid Waste Disposal, Victims' Bill of Rights, Emergency Medical Services, Road Maintenance, Tri-County Solicitor, Assistant Solicitor, School Resource Officer #1, School Resource Officer #2, School Resource Officer #3, School Resource Officer #4, School Resource Officer #5, Event Security, Sheriff Grants, Clerk of Court Grants, Pre Trial Intervention, SRO Grant, and Criminal Domestic Violence."

There were no comments regarding this public hearing.

2. Public Hearing of Ordinance Number 19-20-769, "An Ordinance Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of a General Obligation Bond, Series 2020, or such other Appropriate Series Designation, of Edgefield County, South Carolina, in the Principal Amount of Not Exceeding \$750,000; Fixing the Form and Details of the Bond; Authorizing the County Administrator or his Lawfully Authorized Designee to Determine Certain Matters Relating to the Bond; Providing for the Payment of the Bond and the Disposition of the Proceeds Thereof; and Other Matters Relating Thereto."

There were no comments regarding this public hearing.

Old Business

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1. Consideration of Approval of Second Reading of Ordinance Number 19-20-769, “An Ordinance Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of a General Obligation Bond, Series 2020, or such other Appropriate Series Designation, of Edgefield County, South Carolina, in the Principal Amount of Not Exceeding \$750,000; Fixing the Form and Details of the Bond; Authorizing the County Administrator or his Lawfully Authorized Designee to Determine Certain Matters Relating to the Bond; Providing for the Payment of the Bond and the Disposition of the Proceeds Thereof; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.”

Mr. Paradise said Edgefield County has a \$750,000 bond for vehicle purchases that will be paid in full after the last payment to be made in July 2020. He said the proposed \$750,000 bond would be to continue to purchase and pay for vehicles for the next five years. Mr. Paradise said the bond payment for the proposed bond will be payable starting in July 2021 and should be a similar payment resulting in the bond not requiring an increase in taxes.

Motion to approve second reading of ordinance number 19-20-769 was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilman Campbell. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of Approval of the Third Reading of Ordinance Number 19-20-768, “An Ordinance Providing for the FY 2020-2021 General Operating Budget and Establishing Ancillary Budgets for Debt Service, E-911 Administration, Industrial Park, Solid Waste Disposal, Victims’ Bill of Rights, Emergency Medical Services, Road Maintenance, Tri-County Solicitor, Assistant Solicitor, School Resource Officer #1, School Resource Officer #2, School Resource Officer #3, School Resource Officer #4, School Resource Officer #5, Event Security, Sheriff Grants, Clerk of Court Grants, Pre Trial Intervention, SRO Grant, and Criminal Domestic Violence”

Mr. Paradise reviewed his memo as seen below:

Memorandum

As Council is aware, the Covid-19 issue has resulted in Council approval of estimated decrease revenue for FY 20-21.

In addition, Covid-19 has caused several projects to be pushed back and will not be completed prior to FY 20-21. Staff is recommending these items be funded in FY 20-21. While the expenses will increase the amount shown being used from the fund balance, Council should remember this is previously budgeted funds that were not spent in FY 19-20. So, the net to the County will be revenue neutral.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Account</i>	<i>FY 19-20 Budget</i>	<i>Spent</i>	<i>FY 20-21 Amount</i>
<i>General Fund</i>				
<i>Robert & Company (LMO)</i>	<i>001-005-05150-05265</i>	<i>\$92,740</i>	<i>\$63,600</i>	<i>\$29,140</i>
<i>Mosely Architects (LE Center)</i>	<i>001-005-05101-05265</i>	<i>\$33,750</i>	<i>\$28,122</i>	<i>\$5,627</i>
<i>Sewer Line Extension (Tavern Hill)</i>	<i>001-005-05100-05224</i>	<i>\$162,500</i>		<i>\$162,500</i>
<i>Total General Fund</i>				<i>\$197,267</i>

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Also, because of Covid-19, FCI Edgefield (federal prison) has ceased allowing inmates to provide services to communities. It is anticipated that during FY 20-21 these inmates will not be available to assist with maintenance of our recreation facilities. Council may wish to fund a part-time position to assist with these duties.

Estimated Expense for Part-time Recreation Employee

<i>Hours @ \$10</i>	<i>Salary</i>	<i>Retirement</i>	<i>W/C</i>	<i>FICA/Medicare</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
<i>25 hours per week</i>	<i>\$13,000.00</i>	<i>\$2,153.00</i>	<i>\$532.00</i>	<i>\$995.00</i>	<i>\$16,680.00</i>
<i>20 hours per week</i>	<i>\$10,400.00</i>	<i>\$1,722.00</i>	<i>\$425.00</i>	<i>\$796.00</i>	<i>\$13,343.00</i>
<i>15 hours per week</i>	<i>\$7,800.00</i>	<i>\$1,292.00</i>	<i>\$319.00</i>	<i>\$597.00</i>	<i>\$10,008.00</i>

Edgefield County is insured for property and liability coverage by the South Carolina Counties Property & Liability Trust (SCCP<). We just received notice these premiums will be increasing from an estimated FY 20-21 budget amount of \$210,000 to \$234,831. This will require an additional \$24,831 be added to account number 001-005-05970-05262 to completely fund the amount of \$234,831. This increase includes a sublimit of \$100,000 per member for Communicable Disease Liability coverage beginning July1, 2020.

Edgefield County has coverage by the South Carolina Counties Workers Compensation Trust (SCCWCT) for worker's compensation insurance. The premium will be reduced from \$237,465 for FY 19-20 to \$206,085 for FY 20-21 a reduction of \$31,380. This is attributable to increased employee safety and fewer accidents.

On May 18th, the Countywide Recreation Committee met and made several recommendations. Included is the recommendation to have both a fall and spring girls softball league to compensate for the cancellation of the Spring 2020 season. If Council wishes to move forward with this recommendation, adequate funding in the FY 20-21 budget should be included. Staff would recommend increasing the estimated revenue for girls' softball from \$1,800 to \$3,600 which will include fall registration. Staff would also recommend changes in the following girls' softball expenditure lines:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Account</i>	<i>Current - Spring</i>	<i>Adding - Fall</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Recreation Supplies</i>	<i>035-005-05856-05209</i>	<i>\$850</i>	<i>\$550</i>	<i>\$1,400</i>
<i>Maintenance & Service Contract</i>	<i>035-005-05856-05226</i>	<i>\$1,200</i>	<i>\$1,200</i>	<i>\$2,400</i>
<i>Uniforms & Clothing</i>	<i>035-005-05856-05241</i>	<i>\$3,000</i>	<i>\$3,000</i>	<i>\$6,000</i>
<i>Advertising</i>	<i>035-005-05856-05261</i>	<i>\$75</i>	<i>\$75</i>	<i>\$150</i>
<i>Insurance</i>	<i>035-005-05856-05262</i>	<i>\$325</i>	<i>\$325</i>	<i>\$650</i>
<i>Total Girls Softball</i>		<i>\$5,450</i>	<i>\$5,150</i>	<i>\$10,600</i>

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The Countywide Recreation Committee also recommended the installation of a nine-hole disc golf course at Bettis Park for an estimated \$5,000. If Council wishes to implement this project in FY 20-21 funding would need to be appropriated. In lieu of adding this expense to the General Fund, Council has two alternate funding options available if they desire to fund the course. The first is that funding for this project may be available from a PARD grant. The second is to utilize funds remaining from a bond issued in 2005 that has a remaining balance of \$33,502.50. This bond was authorized for several projects including "equipment for Bettis Park".

Staff has also received a request from Beaver Dam Watershed District to fund repairs for gate valves on two dams. The projected cost for both repairs is \$50,000.00 with Edgefield County Funding \$25,000 and the Town of Edgefield funding \$25,000. If Council approves this request, staff would recommend placing the county's portion in an escrow account held by the County. When the repairs are made, the Beaver Dam Watershed District can be reimbursed up to \$25,000 for the work.

Based on the needs and requests above, staff would make the following recommendations:

- 1) Reduce the Tavern Hill sewer line extension from \$162,500 to \$137,500 reducing the carry-over expenses to \$172,267; and*
- 2) Not to recommend a part-time position for recreation; and*
- 3) Increase funding for property and liability coverage (001-005-05970-05262) by \$24,831 to \$234,831; and*
- 4) Decrease funding for workers compensation by \$31,380 to \$206,085; and*
- 5) Increasing Girls Softball registration revenue estimates from \$1,800 to \$3,600; and*
- 6) Increase funding for Girls Softball by \$5,150 and distribute according to table above; and*
- 7) Utilize the bond funding for a 9-hole disc golf course; and*
- 8) Transfer \$25,000 to an escrow account designated for Beaver Dam Watershed District dam repair.*

If Council approves the staff recommendations the General Fund budget will increase from \$11,221,093 to \$11,415,161, or an additional \$194,068. The amount used for the fund balance will increase an additional \$194,068 totaling \$452,530 of which \$197,267 will be money funded but not used in FY 20-21. This would leave \$4,108,059 or 4.32 months of fund balance for the General Fund.

Chairman Cooper said he would go through the memo one recommendation at the time and take comments.

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Item 1 - Councilman Campbell asked what the impact would be if staff were to reduce the Tavern Hill sewer line extension from \$162,500 to \$137,500 reducing the carry-over expenses to \$172,267. Mr. Paradise said that project bid was less expensive than anticipated and the \$137,500 should pay for our portion of the project and still leave a little padding in that budget line.

Item 2 – Councilman Campbell agreed with this recommendation. He said things are to unsteady with COVID-19 and not being able to see how this will affect the economy.

Items 3-7 – No comments nor discussion.

Item 8 – Councilman Campbell said the memorandum states the Town of Edgefield will also be contributing \$25,000 for this project. He asked if the cost comes in below \$50,000, will both entities contribute equal amounts of money, since this is a partnership. Mr. Paradise said this had not been considered. Councilwoman Kennion asked if a document can be drafted to indicate this proposal. Mr. Marine said he could draft a memorandum of understanding to include these details.

Motion to approve third reading of ordinance number 19-20-768 was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion.

Motion to amend ordinance number 19-20-768 to include the proposed changes in the memorandum presented by Mr. Paradise was made by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously. There was no further discussion. The main motion then passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Consideration of Appointment to the Employee Grievance Committee.
Shanda Cameron3 Year Term
Motion to appoint Shanda Cameron to the Employee Grievance Committee was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilman Campbell. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Consideration of Authorization the County Administrator to move the remaining balance of the \$45,000 budgeted for FY 2019-2020 to an Escrow Account to continue to Purchase Replacement Computers for County Staff.
Mr. Paradise explained that in the FY 2019-2020 budget, Council budgeted \$45,000 to start the replacement of computers for staff. Many computers have been replaced but Ms. Gilley has requested the remaining money be moved into an escrow account to put towards more computers. The remaining balance is \$2,572.51.
Motion to authorize the County Administrator to move the remaining balance of the \$45,000 budgeted for FY 2019-2020 to an Escrow Account to continue to Purchase Replacement Computers for County Staff was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Consideration of Authorization for the County Council Chair to Sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the South Carolina Works Centers.
Mr. Paradise said Edgefield County’s participation with the SC Works System needs to be renewed. Federal funds come to the state of South Carolina and then are distributed to consortiums of Counties.

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The seven counties of Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda together form the Upper Savannah Workforce Development Area. County Councils appoint board members and the board makes funding decisions about physical workforce centers. Mr. Paradise noted the memorandum of understanding does not commit the county to spend any money; it is simply an agreement for organizations inside the centers to share costs. It is the same document which has been reviewed and signed three times previously.

Motion to authorize the County Council Chair to Sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the South Carolina Works Centers was made by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Consideration of Approval of First Reading of Ordinance Number 19-20-770, "An Ordinance to Impose, Subject to Referendum Approval and Pursuant to the Capital Project Sales Tax Act, a One Percent (1%) Sales and Use Tax (The "Tax") within Edgefield County for not more than Eight (8) Years; To Order A County-Wide Referendum on the Question of Imposing the Tax and to Prescribe the Contents of the Ballot Question; to Specify the Purposes for Which the Proceeds from the Tax are to be Used, the Maximum Time for the Imposition of the Tax; and to Provide for Other Matters Relating Thereto."

Mr. Paradise said on February 4th, Council passed Resolution Number 19-20-1070 to create a Capital Project Sales Tax Commission. He said the Commission was established with one representative each from the Towns of Johnston, Trenton, and Edgefield. Three additional members were appointed by Edgefield County Council. He explained that based on advice of the county's financial advisor, the funding staff should anticipate would be approximately \$10,097,269. Mr. Paradise said the Committee recommended that all of the \$10,097,269 be spent for a Law Enforcement Center. He also noted the approval of this ordinance is necessary for the question to be placed on the November, 2020 general election ballot. Mr. Paradise went over the process for the CPST:

- Commission votes on and sends the question to County Council as it would appear on the ballot for the voters
- County Council accepts or denies the question but cannot amend the question. To accept the question, it has to be passed by ordinance
- If ordinance passed, staff must have the question to the Election Commission by August 15, 2020
- The question appears on the ballot in November 2020 for the voters to pass or fail

Chairman Cooper said he wanted to clarify the time lines. He asked if Council voted in favor of this today, again in July, and then in August at their regularly scheduled meetings, would this give staff time to prepare and send the question to the Election Commission by August 15th. Mr. Paradise said that would depend on when Council met in August, since that meeting may be rescheduled due to the SCAC Conference. Chairman Cooper said Council may need to have a special called meeting at the end of July depending on the August meeting date.

Motion to approve first reading of ordinance number 19-20-1070 was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilman Talbert. This entered Council into discussion.

Councilman Campbell said the question in front of them was determined by the CPST Commission. He confirmed that Council couldn't amend the question but had to either pass it as it was presented or

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let it fail. Mr. Paradise and Mr. Marine said this was correct. Councilman Campbell asked if there was a way that Council would be able to pass a separate ordinance or devise a document that dictates what happens to the money if more is collected than the estimated \$10,097,269. He went on to explain that if \$12 million was collected, Council would need to decide where that money would go or possibly put it all towards the jail. Mr. Paradise said if additional money was collected, that amount would come back to Council for a decision on how to spend it on a capital improvement. He said this could include a town or county project. Councilman Campbell said "so it isn't bound by this ordinance?" Mr. Paradise said that was correct. Councilman Campbell asked what would happen if Council were to fund a law enforcement center using this money and it didn't collect as much as estimated. Mr. Paradise said the county would be responsible to pay the bond with a different revenue source. Chairman Cooper asked if this were to be passed on the November ballot and it started collecting money January 2021 but construction doesn't begin until 2022, would that allow for some reserves? Mr. Paradise said yes but that the money won't start collecting until May 2021.

Motion passed unanimously.

Comments from the Public

1. Mark Jebens – Mr. Jebens started by thanking Sheriff Dobej for his years of service. He then moved on to speak about telecommunications. He started by saying he is not going to ask for money but he would be asking for their influence to try and have telecommunications to operate in Edgefield County. He said there are 3 reliable sources of communication including cable/satellite, cellular and landline. He said throughout most of Edgefield County, the only reliable source available is a landline. He expressed his belief that this is a safety hazard because there is no redundancy and if the landline goes out, citizens have no way to communicate with Fire, EMS or the Sheriff's Office if those services are needed. Mr. Jebens told Council of an example that he experienced with his own telephone service with ATT. He noted that his landline went out one day and he contacted ATT and was told that it would be 2 weeks before the connection was restored. He said he finds this unacceptable and spoke to Senator Massey about his situation. He went on to say that after Senator Massey got involved the issue was rectified within 48 hours. He said it is not right that the citizens only have access to ATT and that he would like to see County Council use their influence to bring other service providers to Edgefield County.

Executive Session

None

Councilwoman Kennion had an update on the work that she has been putting in to try and get a red light installed at the intersection of Hwy 25 and Bettis Academy Road. She said this is a huge safety issue for her and she is going to fight as hard as she can to be sure the request for the traffic light gets the attention it deserves. She explained this has been a request for many years and she thinks that it is her number one priority. Councilwoman Kennion said she has started a petition for this cause and invited everyone in Edgefield County to support the installation of a red light at that intersection. She said she has also been collecting research on what makes that a dangerous intersection and accidents/deaths that have happened to take to SCDOT to try and have that red light installed. Councilwoman Kennion said she has almost 1,000 signatures on that petition. She said she has sent this information to the Edgefield County

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representatives to help persuade them to approve the installation of a red light. She said she would be continuing to monitor this and bring back additional updates as she receives information.

County Administrator's Report

Mr. Paradise started his report by the Treasurer's Office received the annual Multi-County Park agreement funds from Aiken County. This year that check totaled \$64,811.

Mr. Paradise was also pleased to tell Council the Edgefield County employees lowered the mod factor from 86 to 80 for Worker's Compensation Insurance resulting in a cost savings of \$31,380. He said Edgefield County ranks #13 as having the best rating of the 46 counties.

Mr. Paradise then gave an update on COVID-19 stating that as of Tuesday morning, Edgefield County had 51 confirmed cases of Covid-19, up from 32 confirmed cases last month. He said Edgefield County is ranked 23rd in the state based on percentage of population. He also told Council that Self-Regional, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Edgefield County Emergency Management Agency, South Carolina National Guard and the Edgefield County Sheriff's Office teamed up to provide free testing to the people not only in Edgefield County but the surrounding areas in Johnston on May 21st where they tested approximately 370 people.

Mr. Paradise moved on to say Edgefield County has a census response rate of 53.4%. He said while this percentage has increased it is still below the state average of 55.1% and the national average of 60.3%. He also noted that Edgefield County currently ranks 22nd of the 46 counties in the state in percentage of responses.

Mr. Paradise moved on to report the Countywide Recreation Committee met and recommended that the Soccer and Softball seasons be cancelled with an additional Softball season added in the fall. He said Baseball was recommended to play, however the coaches have found that there is an insufficient number of children that wish to play so staff will also be cancelling the baseball season and refunding the registration and sponsorships. He said staff is currently working to process the refunds of the registration fees.

Mr. Paradise then told Council Bettis Park was reopened on May 25th and on June 1st the Kneece building, Building & Planning, the Agriculture building, and Administration building reopened to the public. He said the Courthouse is anticipated to open mid-June in compliance with the Chief Justice's directions. The County library is open by appointment for curbside service. Mr. Paradise said the Sweetwater Community Center will be reopened when gatherings are allowed. He also recognized Joe Simpson for his extra effort with building modifications to help ensure safe separation between employees and the public.

Next, Mr. Paradise told Council that a photograph of the Edgefield County EMS employees and ambulance was featured on the National Association of Counties website for the "We Are Counties" campaign to highlight the importance of county response during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr. Paradise closed his comments by saying the first four "Welcome to Edgefield County" signs have been installed and the next four have been ordered. He said staff anticipates delivery sometime in July.

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Comments by County Council Chair

Chairman Cooper started his report by saying he wanted to add a few things to Mr. Paradise's report. He thanked Joe Simpson for renovating the offices so that they could be opened back up to the public while keeping staff and citizens safe.

Chairman Cooper said the Land Management Ordinance Project was initially postponed shortly, due to COVID-19; however the steering committee had the previous week, and it was broadcast on our county YouTube channel for residents to watch. He said the Planning Commission and the LMO Steering Committee are still several months away from completing this critically important project for our county. He encouraged residents to participate in two ways:

- o First, by signing up to receive updates from our County Planner Kevin Singletary. He said that could be done by an e-mail Mr. Singletary at ksingletary@edgefieldcounty.sc.gov.
- o Second, by subscribing to the County Government YouTube Channel, so notifications can be received about upcoming meetings, where meetings are now broadcast live, as well as being available for viewing afterwards.

Next, Chairman Cooper said prior to Covid-19, Council had many members of the community request County Council review the 2nd Amendment Sanctuary County movement taking place in Virginia, and consider such a resolution in Edgefield County. He said he called John Morris just before the first meeting which only had seats for 6 constituents due to DHEC and CDC Social Distancing Standards, letting him know that Council would bring it up again as soon as the public are able to attend Council meetings. He said he hoped that by the July meeting, Council will have resumed normal meetings, and this would be placed on the agenda for Council to review the resolutions which have passed in other South Carolina Counties.

Then Chairman Cooper said he was in the process of drafting a letter to the railroad company, regarding the potential of acquiring the railroad bed for a future rail to trail system for Edgefield County. He said this is still a work in progress.

Chairman Cooper closed his comments by saying all of our hearts are grieving right now with what is taking place in our republic. As I mentioned Matthew 5:9 in the opening prayer, I sincerely hope that each of us in Edgefield County will use our sphere of influence to promote peace and respect. The tag line for our county is "It feels different here, because it is different here." May part of that difference be the way we continue loving one another, as we navigate the challenges which have been brought to the forefront of our national discussion.

Adjourn

Councilman Campbell made the motion to adjourn at 7:51 PM, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

June 2, 2020

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

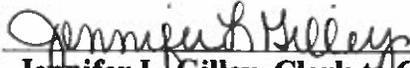
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Edgefield County Council



H. Scott Cooper, Chair

ATTEST



Jennifer L. Gilley, Clerk to Council