

AGENDA
EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
County Council Chambers
October 4, 2021
6:00 PM

AS Council's meetings shall be conducted pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, Council's Rules and Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, in the event Council's Rules do not cover the procedural issue at hand. This agenda may be modified prior to or during the meeting.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Invocation – The Reverend Brent Justice, Antioch Baptist Church
Pledge of Allegiance

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

GUEST SPEAKERS

Calvin Henderson, Edgefield County Freedy Needy Elderly Ministry

IV. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Agenda Items other than Public Hearing Matters

Edgefield County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Section 2-52, Rule 23 governs public comments. Any citizens may sign up to speak at any regular meeting of the county council on matters pertaining to county services and operations, but not on personnel matters. Interested citizens may sign an agenda list maintained by the clerk to council prior to each regular meeting. Each citizen shall be eligible to speak for a maximum of 5 minutes. Additionally, the period for citizen comments shall be limited to a total of 30 minutes. All citizens participating in the citizen comment period shall be subject to recognition by the presiding officer and shall address the presiding officer directly. The comment period should not be a debate period between council members and members of the public. Written comments may be submitted to the clerk to council at any time.

V. REPORTS

Monthly reports for July 2021

(SEE DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS)

Agenda/Minutes of the following meetings:

Planning Commission Work Session.....August 19, 2021

Planning CommissionAugust 19, 2021

Edgefield County Board of Trustees.....February 8, 2021

Edgefield County Board of Trustees.....May 3, 2021

Edgefield County Board of Trustees..... August 2, 2021

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

While developing the agenda, routine or noncontroversial items are placed on the consent agenda, which is a part of the regular agenda. If any member objects to including an item on the consent agenda, that item shall be moved to the regular agenda as an action item requiring discussion. The remaining consent items shall be adopted in a single vote without discussion.

Consent Agenda Ends Here

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Consideration of Approval of Second Reading of Ordinance Number 20-21-794

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WITH AIKEN COUNTY CALLED PROJECT RHINESTONE, SUCH INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK TO BE GEOGRAPHICALLY LOCATED IN AIKEN COUNTY AND ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SECTION 4-1-170 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED; TO PROVIDE FOR A WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH AIKEN COUNTY TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE PARK, THE PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE APPLICATION, AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF FEES IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXATION; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO". This ordinance is to establish a multi-county industrial park (MCIP) with Aiken County.

The park will be located in Aiken County. The agreement to create a multi-county park will allow for the industry in the park to receive certain incentives from the state and county. Edgefield County will receive 1% of the Fee in Lieu of Taxes This is a just a procedural function; it will not involve Edgefield County creating a new industrial park requiring investment on the part of Edgefield County.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Consideration of Approval of Third Reading of an Ordinance Number 21-22-793 "AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 24-29 (a)(1), CHAPTER 24-29(c) and 24-29(d)(3) OF THE EDGEFIELD COUNTY LAND ORDINANCE"

The Planned Development (PD) regulations don't include a minimum percentage for open space or a maximum percentage required for impervious areas within a subdivision. We are recommending these changes to all future PD's along with a condition that they follow the comprehensive plan, increase the minimum parcel size to 15 acres, increase minimum lot size and a required traffic study. The Planning Commission reviewed the suggested changes and made a few modifications which are included.

(Exhibit I)

2. Consideration of Approval of Second Reading of Ordinance Number 20-21-794 "AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A JOINTLY OWNED AND OPERATED INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK IN CONJUNCTION WITH AIKEN COUNTY CALLED PROJECT RHINESTONE, SUCH INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK TO BE GEOGRAPHICALLY LOCATED IN AIKEN COUNTY AND ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SECTION 4-1-170 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED; TO PROVIDE FOR A WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH AIKEN COUNTY TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE PARK, THE PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE APPLICATION, AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF FEES IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXATION; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO".

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IX. NEW BUSINESS

3. Resolution to Eliminate the Vehicle Road Maintenance Fee

At the September Council meeting you approved raising the county mill from 82.9 to 89.8. The revenue generated from the additional 6.9 mills will be used to eliminate the vehicle road maintenance fee. At tonight's meeting we are asking the Council to ratify their decision by approving the Resolution shown in **(Exhibit III)**. The vehicle maintenance fee will be eliminated as of December 31,2021.

4. Council's Approval to begin engineering on storm water projects. At the Special Called Meeting on Tuesday, September 21 we discussed several stormwater needs in Edgefield County. Most of these are in the southwestern portion of the county. These include eliminating stormwater problems on the following roads; Bramble Road, Big Branch Court, Big Branch Lane, Big Oak Drive, Hickory Drive, and Mill Creek Drive. Additionally we would like to develop solutions concerning flooding issues in the Barton Road area. We discussed these problems with the "C" fund committee Chairman, Sam Crouch who says they will pay for the design engineering if Edgefield County will pay for the drainage improvements. This will save the County about \$100,000. We would like the Council's to request the "C" fund committee to develop engineering plans and specifications for these stormwater projects.

5. Council's Approval of Engineering Agreement with Aiken Electric Cooperative

Aiken Electric Cooperative (AEC) has committed to provide broadband to all their current electric customers in Edgefield County. Although Northland and Comcast provide broadband to several areas in Edgefield County, unfortunately there's about 2000 services that are presently not planned to be served by any internet provider in the near future. AEC estimates they can provide broadband to these underserved areas at an estimated cost just of \$6.5 million. We recommend completing the engineering to determine a more accurate cost. If AEC is going to serve these areas they would like to request County's assistance by providing 50% of the funding. Before committing any funding for broadband in the undeserved areas we need to determine the exact scope of work and its cost. Once a more accurate cost is determined, the County can decide how much, if any, they would like to contribute to this project. The overall costs

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for the County could be reduced by requiring Dominion customers to pay a higher monthly fee for the broadband to help offset the initial installation cost. The Memorandum of Agreement for the engineering is included under (**Exhibit IV**).

6. Approval of new starting salaries for Deputies, Jailers, and Dispatchers.

Over the past few months the starting salaries for those serving in public safety has increased dramatically for all surrounding County and Municipal jurisdictions. These increases range from the upper teens to the mid-twenties. Additionally Generac’s starting pay is 50% higher than what we pay new jailers or dispatchers. In the past few weeks 6 individuals have chosen to leave and we understand several more are contemplating leaving. To counteract these losses we need to increase the starting pay for our deputies, jailers and dispatcher by 20% – 25%. All other employees would receive a smaller pay increase depending on their years of service and current pay range. After revising all the Sheriff department’s salaries, we would need an additional \$390,000, to fund a 20% increase and \$470,000 for a 25% increase. To obtain these increases we can use up to \$350,000 of recurring funds from this year’s budget and \$120,000 if we eliminate two of the three sheriff deputies positions in this year’s budget. The combination of the two would allow us to increase the beginning salary for deputies, jailer and dispatch by 25%. Below is a comparison of the Aiken Edgefield County salaries to those of Aiken County, North Augusta and the South Carolina Highway Patrol.

| <u>Position</u> | <u>Salary</u> | <u>20% inc.</u> | <u>25% inc.</u> | <u>Aiken Cty.</u> | <u>N. Augusta</u> | <u>SCHP</u> |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Deputies | \$31,502 | \$37,802 | \$39,378 | \$43,470 | \$45,299 | \$44,075 |
| Jailers | \$23,572 | \$28,286 | \$29,465 | \$37,479 | | |
| Dispatchers | \$25,572 | \$30,686 | \$31,965 | \$37,479 | \$34,548 | \$32,448 |

Councilwoman Tiffani Ireland will recuse herself from any discussion concerning this subject.

7. Council’s Approval of Premium for all County employees working during Covid

Our County employees are dedicated to provide the best possible service possible to all out citizens. We need to find every opportunity to show our appreciation and one of those ways is to reward them with a bonus for a “Job Well Done” during these trying times. The American Recovery Plan (ARP) allows us to use these plans to fund premium pay for all essential workers. A review of the ARP [Interim Final Rule](#), gives the key term for “*essential worker*.” Those employees that continued to interact with the public during the pandemic. So, yes, all staff (administrative, etc.) that continued to meet with the public in-person, take work orders, except payments, etc. can be considered “essential.”

Some inserts from the US Treasury FAQ for ARP Below:

Premium Pay – Recipients may provide premium pay retrospectively for work

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performed at any time since the start of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Such premium pay must be “in addition to” wages and remuneration already received and the obligation to provide such pay must not have been incurred by the recipient prior to March 3, 2021.

5.1. What criteria should recipients use in identifying **essential workers** to receive premium pay? Essential workers are those in critical infrastructure sectors who regularly perform in person work, interact with others at work, or physically handle items handled by others.

Critical infrastructure sectors include healthcare, education and childcare, transportation, sanitation, grocery and food production, and public health and safety, among others, as provided in the Interim Final Rule. Governments receiving Fiscal Recovery Funds have the discretion to add additional sectors to this list, so long as the sectors are considered critical to protect the health and well-being of residents. The Interim Final Rule emphasizes the need for recipients to prioritize premium pay for lower income workers. Premium pay that would increase a worker’s total pay above 150% of the greater of the state or county average annual wage requires specific justification for how it responds to the needs of these workers.

Based on this information we recommend that sometime between December 1st – 15th we give all county employees, hired before **January 31, 2021** and still employed as of **November 30, 2021** or who retired sometime in 2021, the following bonus: those working 1 months or more before **3-3-21** will receive \$1,000; those working 6 months or more before 3-3-21 would receive \$2,000 and those working 12 months or more before 3-3-21 would receive \$3,000. All part-time employees would receive ½ of this amount. The full bonus will be given to approximately 114 employees.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC

All additional comments

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO REPORT BY THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

1. **COMMENTS BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL CHAIR**
2. **ADJOURN**