

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

December 7, 2021

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

The Edgefield County Council held their regular meeting at 6:00 PM Monday, December 7, 2021. Notice of this meeting was provided to The Edgefield Advertiser and others as requested.

Members present

Scott Cooper, Chairman
Albert Talbert, Vice Chairman
Dean Campbell, Councilman
Dr. Jacqueline Kennion, Councilwoman
Tiffani Ireland – Councilwoman

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Others present

Roger LeDuc, Interim County Administrator
Taz Potts, AP /Payroll Clerk, and
others as per list attached

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm and Reverend Eldwin Griffin, Pastor of Mt. Alpha Baptist Church, gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was then recited.

Approval of Agenda

A Motion was made by Chairman Cooper to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

None

Guest Speaker

Candi Lalonde- First Steps

Ms. Lalonde is from Edgefield County First Steps and they want to do a story walk in Bettis Park. Ms. Lalonde said she will select the books take them apart and put each page on display boards to read along the walking trail. Ms. Lalonde said the trail is a little over a mile, so they will go halfway with the display boards. Ms. Lalonde said she is hoping that the Strom Thurmond Career Center will build and construct the displays for them. Ms. Lalonde said the whole idea is to get the children outside and give them something fun to do. Ms. Lalonde said First Steps will take care of the cost, she said they have some allocated funds to use. Ms. Lalonde said that they will change the book out about every quarter. Ms. Lalonde said they will also honor a family on the boards. Councilman Campbell asked if something happened to the stands who will replace them. Ms. Lalonde said First Steps will replace them. Councilwoman Ireland said she thinks it is a great idea. Chairman Cooper asked if council approves it and Ms. Lalonde retires will the program keep going. Ms. Lalonde advised that the Board at First Steps would keep the program going. Chairman Cooper advised council that this would be on next month's agenda to approve.

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COMMENTS FROM 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

- **Persons speaking are a part of the official minutes**

John Gault

Mr. Gault said he is presently in district 5 and is being moved to district 2. He is not happy with that change. Mr. Gault asked council to take a look at the district lines and stop slicing neighborhoods in half. Mr. Gault said if council needs to move neighborhoods to another district, they should move the whole neighborhood instead of slicing the neighborhood up into different districts. Mr. Gault said his neighbor is in one district and he is in another district according to the new maps right. Mr. Gault said if the whole neighborhood has a problem, they will not be able to get together and fight it together because they are in different districts. Mr. Gault asked council to please think about this before slicing neighborhoods up in different districts. He said the zoning in the Merriweather section needs to stop. Mr. Gault said the growth needs to be controlled or Merriweather will not be rural neighborhood anymore.

Linda Anderson

Ms. Anderson said she does not want to be like Columbia County, she wants to keep the rural areas of Edgefield County. Ms. Anderson said people are moving to Edgefield County for rural way of life. Ms. Anderson said if Edgefield County does zone, they are just asking developers to come and build more subdivisions. Ms. Anderson said developers like zoning. She said the people are moving to Edgefield County looking for good schools. If Edgefield County keeps cramming schools full of people that are here today and gone tomorrow. She said it's only going to deteriorate what Edgefield County already has. Ms. Anderson said council needs to look at the County to see where it needs growth. Ms. Anderson said if the County is going to pay for the future jail, they need more retail closer to Edgefield instead of North Augusta as a way to bring in more revenue. Ms. Anderson said the community needs to be involved with the redistricting but they really have not been involved.

Kathy Eckert

Ms. Eckert asked council when redistricting is considered how is the population counted. Is it counted per 1,000 or per 5,000?

Mr. Hudson

Mr. Hudson said he does not like the zoning and he does not want zoning. Mr. Hudson said no one on Briggs Roads wants zoning. Mr. Hudson said the public needs to be involved in the redistricting.

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All additional comments

REPORTS

Monthly reports for September 2021

(SEE DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS)

Agenda/Minutes of the following meetings:

September 2, 2021-----Edgefield County Transportation

September 8, 2021-----Planning Commission

October 14, 2021-----Planning Commission

CONSENT AGENDA

.....None
Consent Agenda Ends Here

I. OLD BUSINESS

**1. Consideration of Approval of First Reading of Ordinance Number 20-21-795
AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING NEW ELECTORAL DISTRICTS FOR
THE ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
PURSUANT TO THE UNITED STATES CENSUS OF 2020 AN IN
COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 4-9-90, SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF
LAWS, 1976, AS AMENDED.**

Every ten years the County must redistrict its County Council districts to meet the current requirements of the census population. Edgefield County Council has stated it's committed to the criteria in the attached Resolution to redistrict Edgefield County pursuant to the standards and regulations imposed by State and Federal law. The County has requested the State's assistance to assist with the redistricting and we plan to complete this process before third reading of the ordinance in February. The State will be at tonight's meeting to discuss any possible changes to the redistricting plan.

Exhibit I

Guest Speaker -Mr. Victor Frantroff is a cartographer with South Carolina Department of Public Affairs. Mr. Frantroff will be explaining what considerations are taken into account when doing the redistricting.

1. The requirement of one person one vote – Mr. Frantroff said this requirement pretty much oversees that if there was a district that had over 200 people in it and another district has 100 people in it, then the people with 100 people has more voice than the district with 200 people in it. For the districts to have an equal voice they will need to have the same amount of people in it.
2. The Voting Rights Act – Protects any interest of racial minority population. Mr. Frantroff said they also take into consideration any state or federal law when redoing the redistricting lines. Mr. Frantroff said that the laws change often.

Redistricting Principles that are used when redrawing the lines

1. All districts must be drawn continuously. All districts must touch.
2. The minimization of splitting any voting precincts.

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3. Any population must be geographical.
4. Respecting the community's interest.
5. Comply with any court decisions and any federal or state laws.

Mr. Frantroff said when calculating the benchmark statics, they removed the prison population. Mr. Frantroff said the total population decreased by 2.79%. It went from 24,212 to 23,557. Mr. Frantroff said the current lines in district 1 is under by 375 people, district 2 is under by 49 people, district 3 is under by -4.53% under, district 4 is under by 174 people, and district 5 is over by 766 people. Mr. Frantroff said right now the total deviation range is 24.22%. Mr. Frantroff said RFA recommends the deviation range be approximately 5% but it can go up to 10%. Mr. Frantroff said that council needs to decide what they want their deviation range to be.

Mr. Frantroff said after redrawing the proposed districting lines district 1 is under by 170 people, district 2 is over by 256 people, district 3 is under by 171 people, district 4 is under by 96 people, and district 5 is over by 196 people. Mr. Frantroff said the deviation range would be at 9.41% now with the new proposed lines, which is under 10%.

Councilman Campbell said he thinks the 9.41% deviation range is too high and it needs to come down some more.

A motion was made by Councilman Campbell to approve First Reading of Ordinance Number 20-21-795. Motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Talbert. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Consideration of Approval of First Reading of Ordinance Number 20-21-796
"AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTERS 8 AND 24 OF THE
EDGEFIELD COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES BUILDINGS AND
BUILDING REGULATIONS LAND DEVELOPMENT"**

For over three months we held small group public meetings throughout all the districts in the County. At these meetings we received input concerning the LMO, future development, zoning concerns and various questions concerning our current regulations. Based on this input we held 10 work sessions with the Planning Commission from July to October. At these meetings the Planning Commission reviewed and made revisions to the development regulations; Chapters 8, 24, 30 and 44 and adjustments to the zoning maps. The Planning Commission approved the final regulations and zoning maps at the November Planning Commission meeting. The following week the Planning Commission members and County Council jointly met to discuss all the changes approved by the Planning Commission. This was followed by a public meeting at Parker Elementary school to receive additional comments from county citizens.

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The revised zoning maps and regulations are ready for Council review and consideration as shown in **Exhibit II**.

Vice-Chairman Talbert made a motion to approve First Reading of Ordinance Number 20-21-796. Motion was seconded by Chairman Cooper. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.

2. **Consideration of Approval of First Reading of Ordinance Number 20-21-797**
“AN ORDINANCE TO ZONE AND REZONE CERTAIN PROPERTIES
LOCATED IN EDGEFIELD COUNTY”

The revised zoning maps are ready for Council review and consideration as shown in **Exhibit III**. It's my understanding that some zoning changes may be suggested by some council members. Changes can be made by a majority vote of council any time before 3rd and final reading. The official Public Hearing will be held at the January council meeting prior to second reading.

Administrator LeDuc said over 80% of the county does not have zoning. Administrator He said this is first reading and they can change the zoning at any time.

Councilman Campbell made a motion to approve First Reading of Ordinance Number 20-21-797. Motion was seconded by Vice -Chairman Talbert. Councilwoman Ireland made a motion to amend Ordinance Number 20-21-797 to remove the zoning along Woodlawn Road and everything on the south and north side Briggs Road, also everything west of Stevens Creek. Additionally, she asked to change two lots, parcel # 146-00-00-002-000 (86.89 acres) back to (RR) and parcel # 146-00-00-018-000 (80 acres) currently proposed to be (GR) back to (RR). Motion was seconded by Councilman Campbell to amend Ordinance Number 20-21-797. 4 voted to amend ordinance #20-21-797, Chairman Cooper voted against amending Ordinance # 20-21-797. Motion passes unanimously.

3. **Consideration of Approval of Resolution Number 20-21-1142**

Resolution on Redistricting - Edgefield County Council has stated its committed to approving criteria to redistrict Edgefield County pursuant to meet the standards and regulations imposed by State and Federal law. Additionally, the County must redistrict its County Council districts to meet the current requirements of the census. They have asked the Administrator to work with the State to develop new districts that meet these requirements. Any recommended changes will be displayed on our county website for the public review. **Exhibit IV** listed the criteria that we will follow as the new districts are developed.

Administrator LeDuc advised council by passing this Resolution you will have documentation that Edgefield County followed all the federal and state regulations. Councilwoman Ireland made a motion to approve Resolution Number 20-21-1142. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.

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- 4. Approval to purchase a new ambulance** - Every day we utilize three ambulances; our newest one is a 2019 unit with over 76,000 miles, unit two a 2018 has 125,000 miles, unit three a 2014 has over 285,000 miles and our spare is a 2012 unit with 327,000 miles. The 2012 unit should have been replaced leaving the 2014 unit as the spare. Unfortunately, we're a year behind schedule with a several months wait on any new order. Garrett Lynn, our EMS Director recently obtained bids through the South Carolina Business Opportunity (SCBO) site. Through this process we found a demonstration ambulance with a stretcher and power lift for \$268,089. To fund the ambulance, we requested funding from the Edgefield County Hospital Board. Currently the Board has approximately \$2.2 million in reserve. They are meeting Monday night to vote on their possible funding of the ambulance. If they don't agree with the request, I propose using funds from our vehicle and equipment bond. In either case we would like the Council's approval to purchase the 2020 Ford 550 4x4 rescue ambulance from Atlantic Emergency Solutions. Administrator LeDuc said the Hospital Board voted to approve the funding. Therefore the county will not need to use their reserves to pay for the ambulance. Councilman Campbell made a motion to approve the purchase of a new ambulance. Motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Talbert. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.
- 5. Selection of members to the Law Enforcement Center (LEC) Non-Profit Board** - The Edgefield County voters approved a "Capital Project Sales Tax" to provide funding for the construction of a new jail and associated facilities for the Sheriff's department. Our attorney "Burr-Foreman" recommends the creation of a non-profit board to borrow funds for the County to build the facility. They recommend a board of 3-5 individuals. We would like the council to consider the following board appointments: John Ryan's, Aquisha Carter, Tom Plowden, Andy Livingston and Tracy Freeman. Administrator LeDuc said council needs to approve these members for the Non-Profit Board. Vice-Chairman Talbert made a motion to approve the these appointments. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Ireland. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.
- 6. Tuition Reimbursement Policy** – Over the last several months we discussed a possible tuition reimbursement program to enhance the skill level of current employees. This education reimbursement will help the County develop a Succession Management Program. Attached as **Exhibit V** is the proposed "Tuition Reimbursement" policy for your review along with a proposed "Application". Highlights include a maximum of \$1,000/semester for an "A", 75% or \$750 for a "B", and 50% or \$500 for a "C". Funding would be limited to whatever is budgeted yearly (start with \$5,000) and is not guaranteed until the County has approved the application and the course is completed.

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Councilwoman Ireland made a motion to approve the Tuition Reimbursement Policy. Motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Talbert. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC

None

All additional comments

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EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS POTENTIAL LEGAL MATTERS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7: pm Vice-Chairman Talbert made a motion to enter into Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Campbell to receive information from our County Attorney.

RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8: pm Councilman Campbell made a motion to return to regular session. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Ireland. Chairman Cooper stated no action was taken in the executive session.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO REPORT BY THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator LeDuc recapped the many events which occurred within the County since April. He stated the luncheon with the employees yesterday, when they received their premium pay was a highlight of his career. He thanked the council for giving him the opportunity to serve the county employees, the public and them year. LeDuc said God had truly directed us through all these times and given Edgefield County a firm path forward.

COMMENTS BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL CHAIR – Chairman Cooper thanked council for tonight’s meeting and said yesterday’s lunch was tremendous. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and looked forward to a New Year.

ADJOURN

Motioned by Councilwoman Ireland. Second by Vice-Chairman Talbert.
Meeting adjourned at 8: pm

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To watch the County Council Meeting live via YouTube: Subscribe to our YouTube Page – Edgefield County Government. You'll be able to see upcoming meetings and can be notified when we go live.

Edgefield County Council



H. Scott Cooper, Chair

ATTEST



Roger LeDuc, County Administrator