

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

June 7, 2022

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

The Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P.M. Tuesday, June 7, 2022, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield, SC. Notice of this meeting was provided to The Edgefield Advertiser and others as requested.

**Members Present**

Dean Campbell, Chairman  
Albert Talbert, Vice Chairman  
Scott Cooper, Councilman  
Tiffani Ireland, Councilwoman  
Jackie Kennion, Councilwoman

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**Others Present**

Roger LeDuc, Administrator  
Andrew Marine, County Attorney  
Taz Potts, County Finance Director  
Aretha Eubanks, Clerk to Council  
Hart Doc Clark, Building and Planning

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The invocation was given by Pastor Lorenzo Williams of Science Hill Missionary Baptist Church.

**Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Campbell reminded everyone about the Executive Session at the end of the meeting and then asked Council if we can move New Business number one regarding the Trenton Community Development Association Resolution to the spot after approval of the minutes. Councilman Cooper made the motion to amend the agenda to approve this request and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Chairman Campbell asked for approval of April 5, 2022, regular meeting minutes. Councilman Talbert made the motion to approve and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Resolution**

Chairman Campbell read resolution number 21-22-1149, acknowledging Trenton Community Development Association for 50 years of sponsoring the Ridge Peach Festival and recognizing its festival volunteers. Councilwoman Ireland motioned to approve the resolution and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passes unanimously. Council presented the resolution to members of the Trenton Community Development Association. Shari Huiett spoke briefly thanking Council for the honor and highlighting the Trenton Peach Festival and its volunteers.

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**Comments From The Public**

Chairman Campbell opened public comment period.

Gail Butler, Department of Mental Health (Beckman Center): Thanked Council for their support of the Beckman Center.

Chairman Campbell closed the first comment period.

**Reports**

Chairman Campbell asked Council if they have any questions or comments on the reports. There were none.

**Consent Agenda**

Chairman Campbell asked is there a motion to approve the Consent Agendas as presented reappointing James F. Burt to the Mobile/Manufactured Homes Appeals Committee and appoint Thomas Dorn II to the Hospital Board of Trustees. Councilman Talbert made the motion and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

1. Consideration of approval of request by Gloria Bynum to paint a mural on County property.

Ms. Bynum and Mr. Lorenzo Williams made their presentation for the mural and its objective to honor Dave the Potter. Mr. Williams provided a sample of the art work to go on the mural. He stated a good paint and primer should last up to 10 years.

Chairman Campbell: Is there any prep work needed to the wall?

Mr. Williams: The wall is sound and will only need a really good primer and sealant. There is no apparent water damage to the wall. The concrete on this wall is very sound. He reminded council that he lives within the county should any issues arise, he could be contacted for repair.

Chairman Campbell: Is the border of the mural also painted?

Mr. Williams: Yes, that will be painted. He gave a time period of the end of July.

Councilman Cooper: Commented that he thought it is phenomenal and that it will bring some vibrancy to that area as it tells part of our story.

Ms. Bynum: Suggested that Council look at some of the murals on the wall on Wrightsboro Road in Augusta, GA.

Councilwoman Ireland: I have seen the murals on Wrightsboro Road and they say a lot.

Councilwoman Kennion: Mr. Williams you have also painted some pictures at Douglas Elementary?

Mr. Williams: Yes, I have.

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Councilwoman Ireland: This is going to cost not quite \$3,000 with expectation of it lasting five to ten years?

Mr. Williams: Depending on the wear and tear of the paint, that is the expectation. In 10 years, it may be faded but it depends on the sunlight. I am more concerned about it peeling.

Councilwoman Ireland: On the property in Augusta that you did a mural, did you have to prime those walls?

Mr. Williams: Those walls were already prepped. The paints that we used in Augusta were mural paints from a company called Nova. But due to the pandemic, the paints for this current mural are delayed. I can go to Lowes and other places that sell exterior paints if needed.

Councilwoman Ireland: Do you need to put a sealant over it?

Mr. Williams: Yes, with an exterior sealant.

Chairman Campbell: Asked Administrator LeDuc if he has any questions or comments.

Administrator LeDuc: The wall is in great shape and is over ten-years old. The only question I would ask of Mr. Williams is it be best if we pressure washed the wall before you paint the mural? Would it help if we had the wall pressure washed?

Mr. Williams: Yes, it would help.

Administrator LeDuc: Chairman if council decides to move forward with the mural. I will ask our staff to pressure wash that wall within the next few days. Mr. Williams, is this an oil-based paint?

Mr. Williams: The paint that I will use will be a water-based paint.

Councilwoman Ireland: Would we enter into a contract with you to do this mural?

Administrator LeDuc: For this small amount, no. But if you would like, we could.

Councilwoman Ireland: I was just wondering.

Administrator LeDuc: If the Council approves this tonight, we will take the funds out of the council's contingency account.

Councilwoman Ireland: If it needs touching up between now and 10 years from now, would you charge us to do the touchups or would we just pay for the paint?

Mr. Williams: Maybe. If it is damaged or anything like that, then yes. But if it last five or ten years and it starts to fade and you want a touchup. Then yes, because of the time.

Administrator LeDuc: If it is defective workmanship, no. But natural wear and tear, yes.

Councilman Cooper: In your experience, when these murals reached their life span, do you paint over it and start from scratch? Or do you actually go in and touch it up?

Mr. Williams: You can do either. It depends.

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Chairman Campbell: Johnston has the big mural on a wall periodically the artist has to come back. The town pays him to touch it up because it fades. He may take off some of the peeled paint and repaint it. Is there anything else you two want to tell us about this?

Mr. Williams: No.

Mrs. Bynum: No. We just want to get it done.

Councilwoman Ireland: I think the artwork is amazing.

Mrs. Bynum: This location is the worst looking place other than those hotels.

Councilwoman Ireland: Ms. Gloria, I remember you wanted to get this done since I was sitting out there in the audience. You have been after this for a while.

Councilman Talbert: We definitely appreciate you and your services.

Councilwoman Kennion made the motion to approve and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

2. Consideration of approval of second reading of Ordinance 21-22-783, providing for a lease and agreement between Edgefield County and Edgefield Aviation.

Chairman Campbell: We have discussed this item a couple of times including last month. But I will ask Administrator LeDuc if there is anything new or different Council need to know about.

Administrator LeDuc: We have the current FBO Administrator, Mr. Johnny Anderson here and the new proposed FBO Administrator, Tyler Flom. We had a question concerning insurance previously, but I we have that worked out. There are no further changes. We are excited to have Tyler Flom and his family here tonight.

Chairman Campbell: Are there any questions or comments about this ordinance? Hearing none. Councilman Cooper made the motion and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Consideration of approval of the third reading of Ordinance number 21-22-781. An ordinance providing for the FY 2022-2023 General Operating Budget and Establishing Ancillary Budgets for E-911 Administration, Economic Development, Solid Waste Disposal, Victims Bill of Rights, Emergency Medical Services, Road Maintenance, Tri-Conty, Solicitor, Assistant Solicitor, School Resource Officer #1 to #8, Event Security, Sheriff Discretionary Funds, Clerk of Court Discretionary Funds, Pre Trial – Intervention and Criminal Domestic Violence.

Chairman Campbell: I know we have one item that the Administrator needs to discuss with us concerning the EMA Department and possibly others. Administrator LeDuc, will you talk us through what we need to know for the final reading of the budget.

Administrator LeDuc: In the original budget we had eliminated the Administrative Assistant to the EMA Director. We believed the amount of work needed to be completed could be given to an existing employee. After talking to EMA Director Suzy Spurgeon and several of the fire chiefs, one area still lacking is helping the fire departments with grants -- especially the smaller ones.

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We had a former firefighter who did a tremendous job for Edgefield County, but he passed away a couple of years ago. That gentleman helped with the grant writing for not only his local fire department but several others. We talked with Suzy Spurgeon about having the assistant back and asked her to work with the various fire departments to obtain grants and to assist them getting equipment, training or anything else that they might need. The assistant would help the fire departments get future grants. Our agreement is to put that position back in the budget with 50% being paid through a grant that we receive on an annual basis. This would add about \$8000 to the budget. There are no other changes to the budget. We did get something in today that is not in the budget. Our property and liability insurance is increasing by \$60,000. Conversely our workers compensation, went from a 0.92 modifier to 0.72. That difference gives us a 17% savings. Ms. Lee Ann Anderson heads up the safety committee and whom I give credit to and the employees. Both the liability insurance and workers compensation equalized themselves. We have \$262,000 in the budget for workers compensation and we only have to pay \$173,000 next year. That is a \$90,000 savings. I did not make the changes on the budget for tonight concerning this. But we did add the \$8,000 for the one employee.

Chairman Campbell: Council do we have any questions about adding this EMA part-time person back for the purpose that was discussed? First let's approve the budget. Councilman Cooper motioned and Councilman Talbert seconded. Now we are in discussion. I would like to see if there is an amendment to add the part-time person for the \$8,000 that was discussed by the Administrator. Councilwoman Ireland made the motion to amend the budget and Councilman Cooper seconded. Motion passes unanimously. Now we are back at the discussion on the budget. Do I hear any discussion? Hearing none. Budget passes unanimously.

**New Business**

1. Consideration of approval of Resolution 21-22-1149 was moved to earlier on the agenda.
2. Consideration of approval of the first reading of Ordinance 21-22-784, which is revising the purchasing code section 2-370, Local Bid Preference.

Chairman Campbell: Administrator will discuss this with us.

Administrator LeDuc: Turn to exhibit 4. This is a new item and it evolved when we received our storm water bids. We had two bids, one from a company in Columbia and the other was a local construction company named TriStar. We would have preferred giving the bid to a local company but their bid was about \$10,000 higher than the firm in Columbia. Our bid preference states we could allow up to 5% differential but only for bids up to \$10,000. So, it is capped it. These changes will provide that 5% difference for bids up to \$200,000. The ordinance would also allow an incentive for local and minority business. We would then be following the federal guidelines for disadvantaged business enterprises as described in the ordinance. We would have a list of these businesses available should something come open. We do not have many bids that are that close, but when we do get them in the future, we will already have this in place. I have looked throughout the state and made comparisons to other counties concerning this. Several have a list of minorities owned businesses for their area. We are open to suggestions on what changes you might want to consider for this ordinance.

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Chairman Campbell: Council do you have any questions or comments for the Administrator concerning this ordinance?

Councilwoman Ireland: I like the idea of trying to hire locally because it supports our economy. We would be employing local people and pouring this back into our tax base. I believe if we use local people, they care more about their work.

Chairman Campbell: I think this is a good way to involve and open the door for people to get involved in bidding and winning bids that maybe they couldn't before. particularly locally owned businesses. This is not unusual as the Administrator said. Other counties and the Town of Edgefield do this to give local bidders an easier path to be on equal footing. I really think we should do this.

If we have no other comments, is there a motion to give first reading to ordinance 21-22-784, revising the purchasing code section 2-370, Local Bid Preference. Councilman Talbert made the motion and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Consideration of approval of the first reading of Ordinance 21-22-785, authorizing Edgefield County to enter into a base lease and conveyance agreement and an installment purchase and use agreement each between the County and the Edgefield County Public Facilities Corporation; Approving the form and terms of a trust agreement between the Edgefield County Public Facilities Corporation and Regions Bank, as trustee, in connection with the issuance of not exceeding \$32,000,000 principal amount of certain installment purchase revenue bonds (Edgefield County project) in one or more series; consenting to the issuance of such installment purchase revenue bonds; approving the form of a preliminary official statement with respect to such installment purchase revenue bonds; providing for an exemption from the county's procurement code; delegating authority to the Chair of County Council and the Interim County Administrator, or either of them acting alone, to approve and determine certain matters; and other matters relating thereto.

Chairman Campbell: Administrator will discuss this with us.

Administrator LeDuc: First, I would like to apologize on behalf of Burr Foreman. Frannie Heiser was planning on coming today but her assistant called me this afternoon and said she became sick and is not able to attend. We have been working with the Law Enforcement Center non-profit board that you established. You gave us appointed five individuals from the county to form this board. We have established the president, secretary and vice chairman for the board. The secretary signs a plethora of paperwork to get this done. They will be finishing up the plans in the next couple of months along with the bid specifications. We should be bidding the project in August. When we receive the bids, they will come to County Council for approval. Once we know what the cost is we can then go to the bond market. Currently we don't know exactly how much money they will have to borrow. However, we do know that we are getting funds from the Plutonium Settlement Funds that are available. Our state Representative and Senators have been working hard to provide these funds. It's probably going to be over \$8 million and could be as high as \$18 million. If the project came in at the current estimating cost of \$38 million and we receive the \$8 million. Not knowing our final cost, we borrowing at \$32 million. If we get the \$18 million from the Plutonium Settlement, then we would borrow less money. This gives us the



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flexibility for the nonprofit to borrow up to \$32 million. By approving this tonight and subsequently the second and third reading County Council is guaranteeing that we would we would pay back this loan on a monthly or quarterly basis. Tonight, you would approve this by title only. You will have the full ordinance for the next meeting and Attorney Marine will have had a chance to review the ordinance. The firm that you hired has done this type of work with numerous small governmental units throughout the state allowing counties to borrow money for large projects like this. To pay back this note, the citizens approved a referendum that provided about \$10.5 million through a \$0.1 cent sales tax to pay for the LEC. The great news is we are getting in twice what we thought we would receive. Instead of receiving \$10 million over an eight-year period of time, we are receiving our \$10 million in about a four-year period of time. What that means instead of not having another referendum until maybe 2026 or 2028, we will have a referendum in 2024. We know that that referendum question than, won't be \$10 million but more like \$22 or \$23 million. In other words, it will take only two referendums to pay for the LEC. If we get \$18 million from the settlement, not all the funds from the next referendum will be needed for the LEC. The Council and the community at large will have an opportunity to decide how that money should be spent. We have some great opportunities in the future. Later I will tell you what the Planning Commission is working on that we may be able to use that funding in the future. Again, this ordinance is for the LEC and we named the loan The Edgefield County Public Facility Corporation. In the future if there are any other large project that the county would like to undertake, the non-profit is already set up to assist any other public facility such as a large park or a gym facility. This is a bold and great step by the county as we move forward with the LEC. For these reasons I congratulate you.

Chairman Campbell: Council do you have any comments or questions on this ordinance?

Councilman Cooper: We started collecting revenues from the capital project sales tax a little over a year ago. Do we know how much we have collected to date?

Administrator LeDuc: Yes, we have received about \$1.7 million and we should be getting \$550,000 to \$600,000 every quarter from this point thereafter.

Councilman Cooper: Thank you to the citizens who voted to made it possible.

Chairman Campbell: Any further questions or comments. Hearing none. Is there a motion to give first reading by title only to ordinance 21-22-785? Councilman Cooper made the motion and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

**Comments from the Public**

Chairman Campbell opened Comments from the Public.

Carol Bryan: I represent the OEDGS and I have been a part of them since we came to Edgefield. I know you are aware of the unpleasant things that have occurred. I am here to thank the volunteers that have given their time. If you have any questions, I will try to answer them.

Chairman Campbell closed this portion of the meeting and moved to County Administrator Report.

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**County Administrator's Report**

Administrator LeDuc: Last month we had our first meeting on radio communication. Both Councilman Talbert and Councilman Cooper represented Council. We had a very good meeting with 25 individuals attending. After the presentation from four different vendors, those present overwhelmingly asked that we consider the Motorola Communication System. The Sheriff, Jody Rowland, EMS Director Garrett Lynn, Clark Hart and myself have met with Motorola Communications today and decided that on Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup> we will be meet with the large group again to discuss two options. Both options will give us superior coverage compared to what we have today. We will discuss adding two more towers and adding all new radios. You need to know that this is going to be expensive but it's absolutely critical. I cannot think of anything more critically needed in the county. Hopefully in August, we will bring you a solution and ask to go out for bids. We will come back with the bids this fall and get your approval to spend the funds to install the towers and radio system. This process takes six or more months to get the radios and a year to get the antennas for the towers. I was asked, why the hurry; my answer is because every month is critical for good communication in the county.

Concerning the animal shelter, Aiken County sent us a letter stating they want us to discontinue using their animal shelter by the end of the year. They understand that it is going to take longer than that to prepare a new shelter. To date we have prepared preliminary plans and given those to the SPCA of Aiken County for review. Based on their suggested changes, we asked Todd Brown to review the plans. He believed the price will be under \$400,000 according to today's prices. After finalizing those plans, we will bid the project and bring the prices back to you for review. Once we complete the plans we will see if Saluda County would like to join us. At one time, Saluda had agreed to work with us on a joint shelter. They do not have an animal control officer and they provide no animal control at this time. This is the direction we are moving and we will keep you updated as we move forward.

The Planning Commission has been meeting diligently reviewing Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive Plan called the Priority Investment. They been asking what are the future priorities for Edgefield County? They came up with three elements to work on. Their highest priority is to plan for a regional park somewhere centrally located within the county. We are looking for a major complex and hopefully a gym. As you all know, we do not own the land that Bettis Park is on. I am sure we will be able to keep that agreement but at some point, we will need to extend it. Maybe the park will be geared toward, football, baseball, pickleball or whatever else we may need in the future. The second thing they are reviewing is overlay districts. The third area of concentration is a conservation subdivision

After the election, I would like Council and the Planning Commission to get together and have a joint meeting so we can jointly decide where we want Edgefield County to be in the future years. Otherwise, we could just get uncontrolled growth. We need to make sure we are both in sync as to what Council is thinking versus what the Planning Commission is thinking. It would not be a long meeting but, it will be a sit-down meeting for an hour coming up with a list of joint objectives. Then prioritize them so as we begin 2023, we can all agree to the items we want the Planning Commission to be working on.



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Chairman Campbell: Are there any comments or questions from Council.

Councilman Cooper: Concerning the Planning Commission, in your discussion of recreation was there any conversation partnering with North Augusta at the North Augusta Country Club which sits inside Edgefield County?

Administrator LeDuc: We met with North Augusta about two or three months ago and that was one of our discussions. Currently 90% of the people in the Merriwether area use North Augusta facilities for their recreation. One we really don't have a gym other than the Town of Edgefield; which we use for basketball. But the North Augusta gym is open all the time. Most of the citizens in that area gravitate in that direction. But we know that area that is growing tremendously with additional growth planned in the future especially in the I-20 corridor. Some further discussions need to be made with North Augusta. But the PC's concentration was more towards the central part of the county at this time. But that does not mean we can't look at both.

**Comments by County Council Chairman**

I mentioned in January that I'd like to see us start a local chapter of the SC African American Heritage Commission. I'm going to ask this new organization to be citizen-organized and citizen-operated with Council participation. I plan to send out a press release asking for volunteers to serve because I believe forming a group like this gives us the best opportunity to preserve our African American heritage in this county and can help communicate that history to residents and visitors. I've spoken with the State organization, and they are willing to help in any way they can.

Also, Council, I want to report to you that I visited last month with many of the elected officials and department heads to better understand their needs and their vision for the future of their offices. I'm pleased to report that they are all passionate about serving our citizens, and they are constantly looking for ways to improve that service. Their work can sometimes feel thankless because many of them see people when those citizens are stress out at the worst and most of the time not happy at the best. So, I told them that we thank them for their continued work to move Edgefield County forward while working with citizens to provide the best service possible.

Finally, I have made 4 more visits with existing industries since our last meeting. I'm also very grateful to them and the jobs they provide our citizens. I'm very happy to note that some of them have plans to expand their work in our county. That means we're doing the right things to keep them here, but we should always look at ways to improve our business environment, like we did tonight giving first reading to the ordinance that will open the door to more local and minority bidders.

That's all I have and there is no other business tonight.

**Executive Session**

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Chairman Campbell: I'd entertain a motion to go into executive session for a legal briefing. Councilman Cooper made the motion and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passes unanimously to Council to go into executive session at 7:07 P.M

County Council returned from executive session at 7:21 P.M.

Chairman Campbell: County Council has returned from Executive Session to Open Session. No business transpired and no votes were taken in Executive Session.

**Adjourn**

Chairman Campbell: No other business to take up tonight, Council, is there a motion to adjourn? Councilwoman Ireland made the motion and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passes unanimously. County Council meeting adjourned at 7:21 P.M.

**Edgefield County Council**



**Dean Campbell, Council Chairman**

ATTEST



**Aretha Eubanks, Clerk to Council**