

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

May 2, 2023

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

The Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P.M. Tuesday, May 2, 2023, 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
Tiffani Ireland, Councilwoman
Dr. Jackie Kennion, Councilwoman
Jerry Moody, Councilman

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2023-1984
Filed for Record in
Edgefield County, SC
Charles L. Reel, Clerk of Court
06/09/2023 01:28:43 PM
CTY MISCELL \$ 0.00
Bk OR Vol 2050 Page 116 - 124

Others Present

David Caddell, Administrator
Taz Potts, County Finance Director
Aretha Eubanks, Clerk to Council
Andrew Marine, County Attorney
Jody Rowland, County Sheriff
Garrett Lynn, County EMS

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The invocation was given by Chris Hoffman, Chaplain of the Merriwether Fire Department.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Campbell asked the Council if they would like to move the resolutions in New Business numbers three and four to just after the approval of the minutes if no objections. Hearing none, Councilwoman Kennion made the motion and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Campbell asked for approval of the March 22, 2023, regular meeting minutes. Councilwoman Ireland made the motion and Councilman Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Chairman Campbell asked for approval of April 11, 2023, regular meeting minutes. Councilman Moody made the motion and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution Recognition

Chairman Campbell read resolution 21-23-1159, recognizing Taji Johnson for Taji's Tents which provides shelter for the homeless. Councilwoman Ireland made the motion and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Chairman Campbell then read resolution 21-23-1160, recognizing Susannah Heinz for her interest in controlling litter and her family for adopting a 2-mile stretch of Garrett Road for litter pickup. Councilwoman Kennion made the motion and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Council presented the resolutions to Taji Johnson and Susannah Heinz.

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Comments from the Public

Chairman Campbell opened this public comment period. Since there were no speakers, Chairman Campbell closed this public comment period.

Reports

No comments from Council.

Public Hearing

Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing on Ordinance 21-23-794, to enter into a Multi-County Industrial Park agreement with Aiken County for Starskey, LLC (Project Sabal). There being no speaker, Chairman Campbell closed this public hearing for this item.

Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing on Ordinance 21-23-797, to enter into a Multi-County Industrial Park agreement with Aiken County for Gateway Properties, LP (Project Grove). There being no speaker, Chairman Campbell closed this public hearing for this item.

Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing on Ordinance 21-23-798, to amend Section 24-286 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinance "Land Development" in regards to the County Planning Commission terms. There being no speaker, Chairman Campbell closed this public hearing for this item.

Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing on Ordinance 21-23-796, an ordinance providing for the FY 2023-2024 General Operating budget and establishing ancillary budgets for E-911 Administration, Economic Development, Solid Waste Disposal, Victims' Bills of Rights, Emergency Medical Services, Road Maintenance, Tri-County Solicitor, assistant Solicitor, School Resource Officer #1 to School Resource Officer #8, Event Security, Opioid Grant, Sheriff Discretionary Funds, Clerk of Court Discretionary Funds, Pre Trial-Intervention and Criminal Domestic Violence. There being no speaker, Chairman Campbell closed this public hearing for this item.

Old Business

1. Consideration of approval of the third reading of Ordinance 21-23-795, an ordinance to quitclaim reverted interest in the Manor House property to Christy Culbreath.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell what we need to know about this item that is different from the first two readings.

Administrator Caddell: There are no changes, and I have no comments.

Chairman Campbell: Is Ms. Culbreath here tonight?

Administrator Caddell: Yes.

Chairman Campbell: Ms. Culbreath, you have read this ordinance and how very specific it is with when you are to commence your building with a construction time of six months. According to the ordinance, you have to notify us within 45 days of reference deadlines on your

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progress with the building construction. The responsibility is on you to tell us these updates as you progress with construction.

Christy Culbreath: I need to notify you every 45 days of progress?

Chairman Campbell: That is not what the ordinance states. It states that you shall notify the county within 45 days of the above reference deadlines of her progress on this project. So, before each deadline, you need to tell us. Am I correct Administrator Caddell?

Administrator Caddell: That is correct. You should give us updates every 45 days along the course of the project based on the construction schedule that you would provide the building department.

Chairman Campbell: This is typical for what we do for construction projects. Council, any questions or comments? Hearing none, Councilwoman Kennion made the motion and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of approval of the third reading of ordinance 21-23-794, to enter into a Multi-County Industrial Park agreement with Aiken County for Starskey, LLC (previously identified as Project Sabal).

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell if there is anything we need to know about this project.

Administrator Caddell: I have nothing new to add other than for public interest, the project will take place in the Sage Mill area of Aiken County.

Chairman Campbell: Council are there any questions or concerns? Hearing none, Councilman Talbert made the motion and Councilman Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Consideration of approval of the second reading of ordinance 21-23-798, to amend Section 24-286 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances "Land Development" in regards to the County Planning Commission terms.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell, but we were told at the last meeting that this put us not only in sync with reappointing in March but also gives staggered terms, which are required of that board.

Administrator Caddell: That is correct.

Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from Council. Hearing none, Councilwoman Ireland made the motion and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Consideration of approval of the second reading of ordinance 21-23-797, to enter into a Multi-County Industrial Park agreement with Aiken County for Gateway Properties, LP (previously identified as Project Grove).

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell if anything has changed since the first reading.

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Administrator Caddell: There are no changes, but as a matter of public interest, this project is in the Sage Mill area of Aiken County.

Chairman Campbell: Comments or questions from Council. Hearing none, Councilman Moody made the motion and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Consideration of approval of ordinance 21-23-796, an ordinance providing for the FY 2023-2024 General Operating budget and establishing ancillary budgets for E-911 Administration, Economic Development, Solid Waste Disposal, Victims' Bills of Rights, Emergency Medical Services, Road Maintenance, Tri-County Solicitor, assistant Solicitor, School Resource Officer #1 to School Resource Officer #8, Event Security, Opioid Grant, Sheriff Discretionary Funds, Clerk of Court Discretionary Funds, Pre Trial-Intervention and Criminal Domestic Violence.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell about this since I believe we have one new thing we wanted to talk about tonight.

Administrator Caddell: There are no changes to the General Fund budget or the Special Revenue fund budgets covered in the ordinance. We do however ask Council to approve an additional line item in the American Rescue Plan Appendix to the budget memo for the purchase of approximately 15.49 acres in the Industrial Park at preset pricing of \$15,000 per acre in the amount of \$232,350. We will come back to Council with a resolution for the contract of sale.

Chairman Campbell: So, this is a preliminary approval of doing that as we approve the budget just for information. No other changes we need to consider tonight?

Administrator Caddell: No other changes.

Chairman Campbell: Comments or questions from Council. Hearing none, Councilman Talbert made the motion and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Consideration of recommendation for reappointment to the Edgefield County Water and Sewer Authority Board.

Chairman Campbell: Traditionally what happens is on Water and Sewer Authority, by state law, they send us their recommendation. We either approve or disapprove recommended appointee and then it goes to the Legislative Delegation to make the recommendation to the Governor who makes the appointment. We are a necessary step in the process. Administrator Caddell, are there any issues with reappointing James Earl Kennamer?

Administrator Caddell: I have no issues with this appointment recommendation

Chairman Campbell: Any comments from Council? Hearing none, Councilwoman Ireland made the motion and Councilman Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of approval of the Animal Care and Control Facility Fee Schedule.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell if he will take us through this item.

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Administrator Caddell: First, I'd like to say a thank you to Sheriff Rowland for doing such extensive research on fees in the surrounding areas. There are still unknowns, and this is new to all of us. We know there will be changes to the fee schedule, staff believe that this fee schedule is adequate for the initial operation of the facility, while being fair to the public and to Saluda County. We will be operating this facility as early as the beginning of July. Staff recommends that we approve this initial fee schedule with an understanding of expected changes in the future.

Chairman Campbell: Council comments or questions on the fee schedule?

Councilwoman Kennion: Are we in control of the fee schedule? Explain.

Administrator Caddell: Are you asking who is in control of collecting the fees?

Councilwoman Kennion: Yes.

Administrator Caddell: We are hiring a facility manager who will serve as a vet technician and coordinator with the veterinarian concerning the intake of animals and billing. This individual will be responsible for billing residents, and entities such as Saluda County fees for the required services we provide at the Animal Care and Control facility. The facility manager will be responsible for keeping up with fee collection. We have established three line items in the revenue portion of the budget. One is collections from Edgefield County residents for services, the second one is the collection of revenue from Saluda County for services provided to them, and the third is for adoption fees that we may collect to help offset expenditures for animals for which we may never receive reimbursement.

Chairman Campbell: I am going to assume that the manager or someone connected with the animal shelter will keep up with the fees and monitor that we are not losing funds. So, if needed, we can come back and make the needed adjustments.

Administrator Caddell: That is correct. We do understand that there will be some monetary loss for animals that are never claimed or sick. But we will constantly monitor the fee schedule, especially in relation to what the veterinarian with whom we contract charges us. We are expecting changes probably yearly, but there may be an initial change possible two months into the operation as we realize what the actual costs are.

Councilwoman Ireland: This pretty much falls in line with other shelters of its kind.

Sheriff Rowland: Yes. Our fee schedule is based on all of our surrounding counties. Anderson and Abbeville were the most informative that I spoke with. I am adopting their policies and procedures for our facility. Our facility will be a few dollars higher than their animal shelter.

Chairman Campbell: We realize this is not a money-making proposition. I just want to make sure we are not losing money on each fee amount.

Sheriff Rowland: We are a few dollars under what we can do at this time. Let me jump ahead. I am having a hard time contracting veterinarians to work at the animal facility. I would like to have more than one. I would like to have one for four to six hours a week and another one for four to eight hours a week. Once I do find the right candidate and I make an offer to them. I may come back to you with these numbers.

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Chairman Campbell: We would expect that especially in the beginning.

Councilwoman Ireland: Animal Control reserves the right to issue ordinance violation citations separate from this fee. Where would that be handled?

Sheriff Rowland: The Magistrate takes care of that.

Councilwoman Ireland: Please explain to the public how that works.

Sheriff Rowland: It is the exact same process as a speeding ticket. We go out and see the infraction. We record it, make the case, and write the citation. Then it is given to the Magistrate's office if needed.

Councilwoman Ireland: We want people to understand we are not making money by writing citations.

Sheriff Rowland: Absolutely, we are not.

Councilman Talbert: Sheriff Rowland, we would like to thank you for your service and hard work. I know you have spoken to me several times about issues you are wrestling with and your concerns. We appreciate all you do and have done for the community.

Sheriff Rowland: We are learning every day. I believe we have a good plan in place to start. I would like to thank those in Anderson and Abbeville for their help. My hat is off to them. I was very impressed with what I saw there and am hoping to mirror them.

Chairman Campbell: Are there any further comments or questions from Council? Hearing none, Is there a motion to approve this fee schedule? Councilman Talbert made the motion and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Consideration of approval of Resolution 21-23-1159, recognizing Taji Johnson, was moved to earlier on the agenda.

4. Consideration of approval of Resolution 21-23-1160, recognizing Susannah Heinz was moved to earlier on the agenda.

Comments from the Public

Chairman Campbell opened this public comment period. Since there were no speakers, Chairman Campbell closed this public comment period.

Report By County Council Members

Councilman Moody: I would like to thank Ms. Susannah Heinz and ask that you be careful out there while working on the side of the road.

County Administrator's Report

1. Update on Radios – EMA Director Crowder spoke with Augusta Communications last week to ask some questions about the new system. He informed me that they have now narrowed down the 4 tower sites. Our North and South towers will not be used. They

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have found higher sites with better coverage. It is anticipated that the project will be complete in 8-10 months.

2. Update on the Law Enforcement Center – Concrete foundations continue to be poured. Despite rain delays the contractor feels that he can catch up with nice weather.
3. Update on the Animal Care and Control Facility – The building has been erected with exterior windows and doors. Framing, insulation, electrical, and plumbing have been installed. Completion appears likely in mid-June. The Sheriff has identified one employee for the facility and is seeking another part-time.
4. We were recently audited by the Department of Revenue on our capital project sales tax that is ultimately used to pay for the LEC. We received a good report with no deficiencies found. A big thank you to Taz Potts and Arlene Traxler for gathering the documents. In fact, our records were so in order that the audit meeting was over in 15 minutes.
5. We received the Rural Infrastructure Grant in the amount of \$950,747 for the Barton Road Drainage project. Council approved the purchase of the property in November pending our receipt of this grant. We can now proceed with the purchase. Now that we know this project can go forward, we will also request assistance from SCDOT for their contribution to the flooding issues.
6. The soccer field drainage project – Last week County and Town crews completed drain installation for over 40% of the project. Next week we hope to complete it. The Town will then top-dress the fields with sand. We fully expect the fields to be open for the fall season.
7. I also wanted to extend a bit of praise to April Morgan for her willingness to move over to the Tax Office part-time. We have been short-staffed for a long time and recently did a hiring push to fill three vacant positions. April who used to work in that office has come over as a training Supervisor and due to her help, the new employees are catching on fast. Juggling two very different jobs is never easy so I really appreciate her willingness to step in.
8. Reminders:

Arlene Traxler's retirement drop-in starting at 4:30 before the June 6 Council meeting

There will be a joint meeting of the Council and the County Transportation Committee on June 1st at 5 pm.

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Chairman Campbell: There are two things I would like to address really quickly. One is concerning the Animal Care and Control Facility. Just so the public knows, we are going to have an open house that everyone can come to and see before we actually operate it. The public will be able to walk through and see it. A date will be determined sometime in the next 60 days.

Administrator Caddell: It will be before July 1, 2023, I assure you.

Chairman Campbell: Council be prepared for that day. We will have a ribbon cutting and all the appropriate things associated with that. The second thing I wanted to discuss is the Capital Sales Tax. It is a very big deal no matter what county you are in South Carolina. There are counties in South Carolina that have gotten in grave trouble for how they have financially handled the penny sales tax. We have been fortunate, I believe, not by luck, but, by good work. This has been on the books now for several years. We have been through two administrators, three counting the interim, and a couple of finance directors. So, the transfer has been done well, and we are still in good graces. When the Department of Revenue audits you, they are not kidding. That is a serious audit situation and they are on it. So, for them to give us a big check mark in a short period of time after they did their due diligence. For Council's purpose, I think that is a big plus for our staff. I thank you for what you do with that because that is not easy. Council, any questions or comments on the Administrator's report?

Councilwoman Ireland: I do have a quick comment. I am happy about the soccer field as you all know. But also, I have remised to do this sooner. I need to publicly thank Mr. John Hudson who donated thousands of dollars of equipment to the county. You all know he has come to the meetings and addressed us many times or issued a word over us. But he gave this material to us and it extremely helped us. We only got about \$10,000 to do this project and he has saved us and really helped us tremendously with the donations. I just want to say thank you to him even though he is not here tonight. Hopefully, this will get back to him. This means a lot to me personally because soccer is near and dear to our family, but it is going to mean a lot to the hundreds-plus of children who play out there every season.

Comments by County Council Chairman

In keeping with the spirit of a shorter meeting tonight, I have just one item.

I want to give everyone advance notice that the regular monthly meeting of the County Council in July falls on July 4. Therefore, this meeting will be held a week later on July 11. We will do all the legal notifications required before the July meeting, but I thought this was a good opportunity to let everyone know.

Adjourn

Chairman Campbell: Council, that's all I have. Since we have no other business to conduct, I'd entertain a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Ireland made the motion and Councilwoman

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Kennion seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The County Council meeting adjourned at 6:41 P.M.

Edgefield County Council



Dean Campbell, Council Chairman

ATTEST



Aretha Eubanks, Clerk to Council

Aretha Eubanks, Clerk to Council