

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

November 7, 2023

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

The Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P.M. Tuesday, November 7, 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
Tiffani Ireland, Councilwoman
Dr. Jackie Kennion, Councilwoman
Jerry Moody, Councilman

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Others Present

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

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Chairman Campbell acknowledged the absence of Vice Chairman Talbert due to him attending a conference out of town. The invocation was given by Pastor Eldwin Griffin.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Campbell asked Council if there are changes. Hearing none, Councilwoman Ireland made the motion to approve and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Campbell asked for approval of the October 3, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes. Chairman Campbell made the motion, and Councilman Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Comments from the Public

There being no comments from the public during this comment period, Chairman Campbell closed this public comment period.

Reports

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

Public Hearing

Chairman Campbell opened the Public Hearing on Ordinance 21-23-780, an ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of a fee-in-lieu of ad valorem taxes agreement by and between Edgefield County, South Carolina, and Bondex, Inc. to provide for payment of a fee-in-

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lieu of taxes; authorizing certain infrastructure credits; and other related matters. No one spoke from the public. Chairman Campbell closed the public hearing for ordinance 21-23-780.

Chairman Campbell opened the floor to the Public Hearing on Ordinance 21-23-781, an ordinance to amend Article 5, Division 2, Purchasing of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances. No one spoke from the public. Chairman Campbell closed the public hearing for ordinance 21-23-781.

Old Business

1.Consideration of approval of the third reading of ordinance 21-23-780, authorizing the execution and delivery of a fee-in-lieu of ad valorem taxes agreement by and between Edgefield County, South Carolina, and Bondex, Inc. to provide for payment of a fee-in-lieu of taxes; authorizing certain infrastructure credits; and other related matters.

Chairman Campbell: Administrator Caddell, is there anything the Council needs to know?

Administrator Caddell: Bondex has committed to a minimum investment of over \$18 million and the addition of at least 13 new jobs.

Chairman Campbell asked the Council if they had any questions or comments. Hearing none, Chairman Campbell made the motion, and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2.Consideration of approval of the second reading of ordinance 21-23-781, to amend Article 5, Division 2, Purchasing of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances.

Chairman Campbell: I will Administrator Caddell what it is we need to know about this ordinance.

Administrator Caddell: Nothing new to add, just to emphasize.

- Maximum amount of items requiring bids increased from \$1000 to \$5000
- Maximum amount of items requiring written but not sealed bids increased from \$5000 to \$20,000
- Items requiring sealed bids shall increase from a \$5000 minimum to \$20,000
- Administrator contract authority should increase from \$5000 to \$10,000.

Chairman Campbell: Council, are there questions or discussions on this ordinance? Hearing none. Councilman Moody made the motion, and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3.Consideration of approval of the second reading of ordinance 21-23-782, authorizing the execution and delivery of a fee-in-lieu of ad valorem taxes agreement by and between Edgefield County, South Carolina, and Project Eagle to provide for payment of a fee-in-lieu of taxes; authorizing certain infrastructure credits; and other related matters.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to tell us about this ordinance.

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Administrator Caddell: Nothing new to add.

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

New Business

1. Consideration of appointment to the First Steps Partnership Board.

Chairman Campbell: Are there any questions or comments from the Council? Hearing none. Councilman Moody made the motion, and Chairman Campbell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of approval of the first reading of ordinance 21-23-784, to amend Chapter 2 Administration Section 2-21 Compensation of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinance.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell if he will discuss the detail of this ordinance with us.

Administrator Caddell: This change simply standardizes the way Council would receive pay increases by having employee cost of living increases apply to Council. Unlike other County employees, council members would not be able to receive the increase until January after the next general election where at least two Council members are on the ballot (this is in compliance with state law). This would standardize the process. As such staff recommends approval.

Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from the Council?

Councilman Moody: On the whole, I agree with what Administrator Caddell says. We do not want to go through what we through with the 50% increase. But, I would like to open for discussion and get you all opinions on a cap for the County Council. I do not believe we are worthy of something the Sheriff or county employees receive. Within a two-year cycle, you could get a mid-year raise, a budget raise, and another mid-year raise. A budget raise could be up to 8%. I would like to have a cap of 2%. Something needs to be in place and I think we need to put a cap on it.

Councilwoman Ireland: I do not want to see us get to where we were before of having to catch up to 20-plus years. I don't think the taxpayers would appreciate that again.

Councilman Moody: We are in a group of 11 counties in the state according to the population and with the salary of those we are 2/3 the same or greater with 1/3 lower in salary. We are already in the middle or upper tier of counties with our population.

Chairman Campbell: There is not an amendment, but a discussion tonight to think about. Any further questions or comments from the council? Hearing none. Councilwoman Kennion made the motion and Councilwoman Ireland second. Motion passed 3 to 1 with Councilman Moody opposing.

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3. Consideration of approval of resolution 211-23-1170, authorizing a five-year extension of the investment period under that certain fee-in-lieu of tax agreement between Edgefield County and Milliken & Company.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to walk us through this ordinance.

Administrator Caddell: State law allows one five-year extension of the investment period for a fee-in-lieu of tax agreements. Milliken is seeking to make additional investments in the County and would like these investments covered under their existing FILOT. We appreciate their investments in our county and staff recommends approval of this extension.

Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from the Council. Hearing none. Chairman Campbell made the motion and Councilman Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Consideration of approval of resolution 21-23-1171, a resolution of Edgefield County supporting the South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission, and recognizing and approving of the Edgefield County 250 Committee.

Chairman Campbell: I will turn this over to Administrator Caddell to go over the details.

Administrator Caddell: The SC250 Commission has the responsibility to plan and execute a proper observance of the Sestercentennial (250 anniversary) of the American Revolution in SC and to celebrate and promote SC's role in the American Revolution. Tonight, we have Bill Davies, Vice Chairman of the SC250 Commission to speak on this issue.

Bill Davies: This committee was formed by the legislature with the focus on celebrating the war that allowed us to have elected officials instead of a king across an ocean. The legislature gave us two goals, education and cultural heritage tourism. What we would like to do is help each county in the state get the travelers off the interstate and drive through the small counties and rural areas of the state like Edgefield County. The committee we are asking you to approve which is a diverse and inclusive committee of people from all over the county will work with us to help set up things within the state and county related to the Revolutionary War that will draw tourism to the small counties. We have been in existence since 2019, and have given out grants to counties in the amount of \$3.3 million dollars. We can not give grants here until the resolution is approved. We are asking the for \$12.9 million dollars in the coming fiscal year. Most of that will go towards counties. We want to get started because the 250 Committee technically starts in 2026. That would give us 20 months to get this set up. I think this will help Edgefield County. We could make a difference if we work together.

Chairman Campbell: Any questions or comments from the Council?

Councilwoman Ireland: You are not asking us for \$12.9 million?

Bill Davies: No.

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Chairman Campbell: Council, if there are no other questions or comments, is there a motion to approve the resolution? Councilwoman Ireland made the motion, and Councilman Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Consideration of approval to award the contract to Great Southern Recreation in the amount of \$22,667 to install playground equipment at 312 Penn St. for County recreation. The cost and discount is preset by the National Purchasing Cooperative Omnia.

Chairman Campbell: I will turn it over to Administrator Caddell to explain this purchasing request.

Administrator Caddell: This is the final step to finishing this project at what will be a county recreation facility once open. We have the funds to pay for this playground equipment in the County's Recreation escrow account.

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

6. Consideration of approval to award the contract to Churchich Recreation in the amount of \$33,320.55 to install playground equipment at Bettis Park for County recreation. The cost and discount is preset by the National Purchasing Cooperative Sourcewell.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell if he will explain this purchase to us.

Administrator Caddell: This playground equipment will match the existing equipment at Bettis Park and enhance the existing playground significantly. This is being funded from the state appropriation for Bettis Park improvements.

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

7. Consideration of approval to purchase nine Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) at a cost of \$7875 from Coro Medical LLC.

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

Administrator Caddell: This is an item that Recreation Director Nick Wates and EMA Director Foster Crowder feel strongly about and I appreciate them both wanting to make our recreation programs and facilities as safe as possible. Nick recently attended CPR training which covered these AEDs and will keep one with him when attending games. Others will be at county rec venues and rental properties as well as the Administration building. EMS staff will periodically ensure the they are in working order.

Councilman Moody: Where will they be located? Will they be in the environment outside?

Administrator Caddell: We are purchasing them with protective weather proofing covering, but kept inside.

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Councilwoman Ireland: We are thankful for Foster requesting this. Councilwoman Kennion and I were just discussing recreation and the Mayor at the soccer field because recreation does not require physicals. We do have children who are playing sports with illnesses and health issues that we don't know about. I pray we never have to use these devices, but glad we have them. I appreciate the hard work to get this done.

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

8. Consideration of approval to upgrade high-pressure sodium lights at Bettis Park through Dominion Energy's Energy Saving Retrofit Program. Dominion Energy will cover \$60,000 of the cost and Edgefield County \$90,000.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to give us some of the details.

Administrator Caddell: We propose to convert the field lighting on four of our six fields to LED lighting as well as the bathrooms and park maintenance building. This will reduce our power bill by about 70% and enhance the lighting. This will be funded with the state appropriation for Bettis Park, not county funds. The reason that there are no bids is that this is a set incentive rate offered by Dominion so the pricing is fixed.

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

9. Consideration of approval to award the contract to Gore Construction to construct a restroom facility at Bettis Park field 6.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to walk us through these details.

Administrator Caddell: This is the new bathroom that will be installed at the Bettis Park baseball field across the street from the larger park. Gore Construction had the lowest bid and we have been satisfied with their work on the Boy Scout building. We are tweaking the size to get it within our budget of \$70,000. Again, this project will be funded with the state appropriation for Bettis Park.

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

10. Consideration of approval to award the contract to RECURSAV to install new audio equipment in Council Chambers.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell if he will walk us through this one.

Administrator Caddell: We have received quotes to improve our audio equipment for this building. Many listening online have difficulty hearing. We had funds in the budget to pay rent on this building which we now own, so we propose to pay for this upgrade with those funds.

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Chairman Campbell: I typically try to watch the Planning Commission Meetings and others so I don't have to physically be here. It is easier to watch online but harder to hear online.

Councilman Moody: I would like to thank Doc and Aretha for all the work you did on this project. This was one of the first things I came to Doc about after I was elected. This gives the people who can not come up here an opportunity to see and hear what is going on.

Councilwoman Ireland: How quickly do you think this will get done?

Assistant Administrator Clark: Most of the equipment is off the shelf. We specifically ask them to exclude any items that would include heavy modification of the building as I know the plans of the Council in the future to either remodel this chamber or maybe move to another building. With the potential future remodeling, they are basically going to install a rack under the counter where your feet are right now and all of the equipment will be placed inside of that rack. All of the equipment will be under this portion of the podium. This is a digital system that will bring us into the new age which you have right now is analog. You know that the little recorder on the desk next to Aretha is all that records these meetings. This takes us to the digital system that will write the minutes, and translate each microphone individually. Also, it will place it on our YouTube channel. So, if we have hearing-impaired people watching on YouTube, they will be able to tell who is speaking in real time live. Since most of this is being attached to a rack and wired into our existing equipment, it will be a matter of weeks before it is completed. Once they get all the equipment in, then they will schedule to install it.

Chairman Campbell: Any further comments or questions from the Council? Hearing none.

Councilwoman Ireland made the motion, and Councilman Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

11. Consideration of approval of the first reading of ordinance 21-23-785 to add Project Eagle to the Multi-County Industrial Park (MCIP) agreement with Saluda County.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to walk us through this item.

Administrator Caddell: We propose to add Project Eagle to our existing Multi-county park with Saluda County. Saluda has begun this process as well. This is for the benefit of an Edgefield County company which will be named at the December 5, Council meeting.

Chairman Campbell: This is not a real industrial park? It is only paperwork of a multi-county park as we have done previously in the past.

Administrator Caddell: Correct. Saluda would receive one percent of the tax funds for this project.

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

12. Consideration of approval of the first reading of ordinance 21-23-783, to amend Chapter 6 Animals, Sections 6-21 and 6-22 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances.

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Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell for details on this item.

Administrator Caddell: This is a very minor change to our Animals ordinance but one requested by our ACCF Manager. We seek to change business days to calendar days. This will facilitate faster adoptions of unclaimed animals, thus opening more room in the facility to take more animals. Staff recommends approval.

Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from the Council?

Councilman Moody: It does not speed up euthanizing the animals?

Sheriff Rowland: No, it does not.

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

Comments from the Public

Joanne Pace: I am president of an association in Trenton, and part of my duties is to make sure certain covenants are upheld. We have had a couple of instances where several violations occurred in our neighborhood. So, I did as I was supposed to by writing letters asking the resident to remedy the violations. I got nowhere with that response. I called the County to see if they could do anything to help because I did not know the rules here in the County. I was told that you have a website, and you have nuisances which I did look up. They are in line with ours with the same violations. I filled out the forms and an officer followed up with me. One was in February, one was in April, and one was in September. We are still in the same stage and nothing has been resolved with the same problem still existing. Again, I went back to your website and read what the procedure is and what is supposed to happen. My question to you is why are we stagnant right here? Why are we not going forward? Is the County going to resolve these issues, or do I keep calling? I am looking for answers.

Chairman Campbell: If you are looking for answers from the four of us, we give them to you because of the specific case and we don't know the details. But, Sheriff Rowland, Administrator Caddell, and Assistant Administrator Clark are here who right after this meeting will get with you to get your questions answered.

Report By County Council Members

Councilman Moody: I would like to thank Sheriff Rowland and the EMS Department, as well as the other departments that show up for Trunk-A-Treat at Bettis Park. I think it was a good event that was well attended. Hopefully, those departments are willing to continue this event in the future. I think the kids thoroughly enjoyed it.

County Administrator's Report

1. The Veteran's Affairs Office in coordination with the American Legion and VFW are collecting nonperishable items and commitments for frozen Turkeys to provide

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Thanksgiving dinners to local Veterans. Donations may be dropped off at the VA office at 304 Gray St for the next two days.

2. Edgefield County has applied for substantial grant funds for park expansions including one on Star Rd at Rabbit Trail. Part of this process involves requesting written public comments from citizens for a three-week period. Comments may be dropped off or mailed to my attention at 124 Courthouse Square Edgefield or emailed to dcaddell@edgefieldcounty.sc.gov. The deadline for this process is November 30 though we welcome public input anytime. In addition, there will be a Recreation Committee meeting November 15 at 6pm here in Chambers. I will present an update to the Recreation Committee on County parks, current and proposed. Public comments may be given at that time.
3. Our EMA Director, Foster Crowder, has organized firefighter level I training for our fire departments. On that note, he has already graduated two classes of firemen from emergency medical responder class and held a CPR class for County staff.
4. We have begun using the recent Opioid settlement funds to provide training on signs and symptoms of overdose and how to respond. If you have a group that would like this training please contact Suzanne Boyd at 803-480-3346. On a side note, every County was allocated funds but only 26 of the 48 counties has applied. We appreciate our staff sticking with this difficult process to establish a program and overcome all the red tape put in place by the state, especially Garrett, Sheriff Roland, Lakeisha Bryant, and Hart Clark.

Comments by County Council Chairman

I just want to remind Council of two upcoming dates.

First, we will have a brief called meeting on Nov. 15, 5 p.m., right here in Council Chambers, to give second reading to item number 11 under new business. It's the joint industrial park item for Project Eagle. By doing that, it puts us on track to have a public hearing and third reading at our regular December meeting, which means we can have this item completed by the end of the calendar year. That's important to this industry.

Second, on Nov. 16, 6 p.m., the Edgefield County Legislative Delegation will be holding their annual meeting here in Council Chambers. I've been asked to give an update on Council's work during the past year. I hope all of you can attend as well.

Adjourn

Chairman Campbell: Council, that's all I have. Since there is no other business on the agenda, I'd entertain a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Ireland made to the motion, and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The County Council meeting adjourned at 6:52 PM.

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Dean Campbell, Council Chairman

ATTEST



Aretha Eubanks, Clerk to Council