

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

The Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P.M. Tuesday, January 2, 2024, 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

Instrument Book Volume Page
2024-454 OR 2102 139

2024-454
Filed for Record in
Edgefield County, SC
Charles L. Reel, Clerk of Court
02/08/2024 11:39:33 AM
CTY MISCELL \$ 0.00
Bk OR Val 2102 Page 139 - 153

Others Present

David Caddell, Administrator
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. Chairman Campbell gave the invocation. Following was the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Campbell asked the Council if they had any recommendations to change to the agenda. Hearing none, Councilman Talbert made the motion, and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Administrator Caddell came before the Council with ballots for the Chairman position. After verification of the count, Administrator Caddell announced that Councilman Dean Campbell was voted unanimously again as Chairman. Administrator Caddell repeated the process for the Vice Chairman position. After verification of the count, Councilman Albert Talbert was voted unanimously again as Vice Chairman

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Campbell asked the Council for the approval of the December 5, 2023, Regular Monthly Meeting minutes. Councilwoman Kennion made the motion, and Councilman Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Campbell asked the Council for the approval of the December 19, 2023, Called Meeting minutes. Councilwoman Ireland made the motion, and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Special Recognition

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
January 2, 2024
6:00 PM
County Council Chambers

Chairman Campbell acknowledged that we will be recognizing our Employee of the Quarter. I will ask Administrator Caddell so he can tell us about this employee.

Administrator Caddell: I would be happy to. Our employee of the quarter is Roy Cleveland, Foreman for the Roads and Bridges Department. I would like to read the nomination letter that was sent in for Roy.

I would like to recommend Roy Cleveland for the Employee Recognition December Quarter.

Roy does an outstanding job for the Roads and Bridges department. He helps others when they need the help. He makes quick and right decisions. Roy works well with other employees and helps with the mechanic work, which saves the County money. Roy has helped with training employees to run the motor grader. Roy was promoted to Foreman this year for his knowledge, skills, excellent work ethic, and his dedication to the Citizens of Edgefield County.

Congratulations to Roy Cleveland, Employee of the Quarter.

Roy Cleveland was presented with a gift for being Employee of the Quarter and a picture taken with the County Council.

Comments from the Public

Chairman Campbell opened the public comment period. With no speakers, Chairman Campbell closed the 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 21-23-786, an ordinance to amend Chapter 24 Land Development Sections 24-248, 251, 252, 285 & 286 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances including Application, Major Subdivisions, Land Development other than a subdivision, County Planning Administrator, and County Planning Commission.

David Hair: Councilman Talbert is my representative on the County Council, and we are pleased to have him here representing us. He always seems to listen to what the folks in his district think. My opinion is this Planning Commission is change being voted on has taken the representatives out of the government and the people out of the process. This makes them irrelevant, and I would ask that you all do not approve that change and leave things as they are so people have their representatives in the districts they can go to. As it is now, if one person is making a decision, there is no reason for these other people to even listen to anybody. So, I ask that you leave it alone and don't approve it.

Jake Garrison: I concur with him. I am not really sure why we are trying to shift it to less involvement from the people. I may not agree with all the Planning Commission does but it seems like it gives it more diverse opinions and more public decision-making. I think it is better

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

to have that protection. This is not personal against someone, or that we don't trust them. I think you have a lot of safeguards when you spread that out. I highly recommend keeping it with a public Planning Commission, not just one individual. I hope my representative will do that and feel the same way.

Kathy Ekre: Karlene Butler is my representative on the Planning Commission. It does take an interruption in changing the final authority to put it to one person. My concern is I think Trestle Run is a perfect example of how things can go awry real quick without having some kind of input or checks and balances so that folks can at least figure out what is going on instead of having one final authority that does not come up for some kind of public discussion. I am against changing how the Planning Commission is going to decide things.

Hearing no more comments, Chairman Campbell closed this Public Hearing.

Old Business

1. Consideration of Approval of the Third Reading of Ordinance 21-23-783, to amend Chapter 6 Animals sections 6-21 and 6-22 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell if there is anything since the second reading that we need to consider.

Administrator Caddell: There is no new information.

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

2. Consideration of Approval of the Second Reading of Ordinance 21-23-786, to amend Chapter 24 Land Development Sections 24-248, 251, 252, 285 & 286 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances including Application, Major Subdivisions, Land Development other than a subdivision, County Planning Administrator, and County Planning Commission.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell or Assistant Administrator Clark who couldn't make it to the last meeting because of illness but he is back now. So, there may be new information or information we need to know.

Administrator Caddell: There are two points I want to make on this. These changes were voted on by the Planning Commission, approved by the Planning Commission, and advanced to the Council for consideration by the Planning Commission. This is not an attempted seizure of power from the Planning Commission. They recognized that their role was more suitable in planning, suggesting new regulations, and new ordinances, and not individual project approval. They will still play a role in that. The second point is the public will continue to have a voice. Nothing changes in terms of holding a public hearing, a Planning Commission study session with the developer, and the ability of the Planning Commission to question and negotiate with a developer. Our staff also questions and negotiates with developers. But we do need to ensure that if we deny a project it is based on the regulations, and if we approve a project it is based on the regulations. I will turn it over to Assistant Administrator Clark if he has anything to add.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

Instrument Book Volume Page
2024-454 OR 2102 142

Assistant Administrator Clark: The primary thing that I would like to say is that this does not change the legislative authority of the Planning Commission. So, the primary duties of the Planning Commission are comprehensive planning and writing our land development regulations such as zoning setbacks. None of those changes, nor do the public hearing process. Every development that is applied for will still go through the exact same process they go through right now. They will still post the property, still have a public hearing, still have a work session, and they will still have a vote. The only thing that is changing is that the final decision on whether it is a legal or illegal preliminary plat will come from my office rather than from the Planning Commission. That is the only change other than the appeal process that is being put in on the county side that gives the developer the ability to appeal my decision directly to the Planning Commission should I deny them in a way they feel is unjust. Other than that, there are no substantive changes to the way the Planning Commission will operate. They will still have 21 days of public notice that will be put in the newspaper, they will still have a public hearing, and the Planning Commission will still be able to sit down with the developer to discuss the project and make recommendations during work sessions. They will even still be able to ask the developer to extend their approval period. The State of South Carolina gives us 60 days. We have to issue a final decision in 60 days or the state automatically considers it automatically approved. The only way that can be extended is by mutual agreement between the county and the developer. So, they will still have that power and all of their legislative authority. For example, if a development comes in, the Planning Commission hears it in the public hearing and makes its recommendation to me. I find three things that they did not like and then say no. They meet these regulations and the Planning Commission was under the impression that those regulations meant something else. They will literally have a list in their hand of what laws and regulations they need to recommend changes in front of them. So, it has some added benefits there as well. I will be happy to answer any questions the Council may have.

Chairman Campbell: Let me ask a couple of clarifying questions here that may help us all. So, this new ordinance does not cover all the authority of decision-making for the Planning Commissions. It only gives you certain authority on certain things like major subdivisions.

Assistant Administrator Clark: Even on major subdivisions, it is not that major of a change. It is only a change to the preliminary plat approval process. All the other things that the Planning Commission does are still exactly the same as it is now. This changes the legal stamping of the preliminary plat approval to the Planning Commission, then to me. Obviously, during the final plat approval, the process is a lot more complicated because you already have the engineering done, DHEC submittal, environmental submissions, and the other entities involved. For example, Fox Run, which was over there off of Shortcut Road on Copeland Road, was approved by the Planning Commission, but as you all noticed, it never got developed. The reason for that was DHEC approved stormwater, but that was contingent on approval from DOT to put that stormwater under the road. They could not get the encroachment from DOT to put the stormwater pipe under the road. So, I denied it outright and it never came back to the Planning Commission for any change or edit because they could not meet a state regulation. That project died on my desk. Now, that project would come back to the Planning Commission, and they

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

Instrument Book Volume Page
2024-454 OR 2102 143

would get a report explaining why this subdivision failed. To be clear, the only thing that changes is who signs the preliminary plat.

Chairman Campbell: My next point is because I think there is some misconception among the public and that is you will be making all the decisions for the Planning Commission. But, I think you have told me before that based on if you look at 2023 as a total, the Planning Commission has probably made double the amount of decisions that you did because they have the authority to do such.

Assistant Administrator Clark: All their applications to amend the Comprehensive Plan, zoning other land development items remain the same. All of those items are still solely in their jurisdiction. I do have the authority to make an application directly to the County Council as is, but there is no reason for me to skip the Planning Commission process. So, all of my applications would go through the Planning Commission to the County Council. If I did not, you all would just tell me to go through the Planning Commission.

Chairman Campbell: If I am not mistaken, correct me if I am wrong that there are developers who came to you this past year and gave you some preliminary information about a development they wanted to do. You looked at it and said it does not meet this regulation or ordinance and then they decided they did not want to do it. The public never knew about it because you made the decision which is part of your job.

Assistant Administrator Clark: That is because most developers feel if they can't get past staff, there is no point in spending the money to make the official application. Just to give you an example, if a PUD was applied for and I was completely dissatisfied with it after writing up half a dozen unmet requirements. Then they demanded to come to the County Council for that plan development anyway. The first thing I am going to do is stand up in the meeting and inform the County Council of the things they have done wrong. Most developers won't proceed to that with the application if they cannot get through my preliminary review simply because it would be a waste of money.

Chairman Campbell: My last question is when you are checking the boxes of all the things that need to be done for a major subdivision. All of your checks are what I call fact-based, not opinion-based, which do you use?

Assistant Administrator Clark: They are completely fact-based. My review is all about the text of the law. If I am not sure, then I send it to our attorney to get his opinion directly. You cannot judge property rights based on people's opinions no matter how much people may wish that was otherwise. Your property rights are constitutional and it has to be a legal decision in the end.

Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from the Council.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

Instrument Book Volume Page
2024-454 OR 2102 144

Councilman Talbert: I have no questions but I appreciate you and your expertise in clarifying a lot to our citizens who were kind of confused. Hearing what you just indicated; I hope it will enlighten them.

Assistant Administrator Clark: I am always available and they can always call or email me. I am happy to answer their questions.

Councilman Moody: Doc has made great points but there are two things I have questions about. One is Anniston Point would have 84 houses right now of what I call cookie-cutter houses. There is no character to them. When you are washing your car, you have to be careful not to get the water on your neighbor's car because of how close the houses are. But I think by public input, we got it down to 33 houses. That is my point number one. My second point is I am up here to represent you all and the people who have contacted me that don't want it so that is why I am not voting for it.

Councilwoman Ireland: I have a few comments. First of all, I want to point out a couple of things. Doc nor his office asked for this change. I want that to be clear. Doc did not come to us soliciting that this be changed nor did any of his staff from the building department come to us and ask us to change this. As stated previously by the Assistant Administrator and Chairman, these decisions will be based on laws, not what he wants or does not want. Any decisions made here have nothing to do with our decision but with trust. We trust our employees. We have an impeccable staff which I will put up against anybody's County anywhere. We have a great staff. Again, they must follow the law, and let me remind you of those laws that the Planning Commission helped to write and put into place. So, if you are not happy with the way things are going or the laws you are seeing, then talk with someone on the Planning Commission because that is where you need to start. This process does not change anything. No decision by the planning department will be made until after the Planning Commission has waited on it, and after there has been a public hearing. Then, the Building Official or County Planner will make his decision. I would like to ask if there is something else like this last controversial development that we had some members bring up some laws or things that they thought you missed. If that happens again, and you hear them bring up points, you can ask to hold off. You do not have to make a decision then. You can go back and research these points that they brought up.

Assistant Administrator Clark: Obviously, we are still stuck in the 60-day window that we have to make our final decision. But, if the Planning Commission were to bring up a law, for example, that I had not considered or missed in my review, then I could ask the Chairman to have a called meeting, still within that 60-day window before rendering my final decision. The only caveat is I would have to have the Planning Commission agree to call another meeting as you cannot discuss evidence in a quasi-judicial setting without the applicant present. As long as the Planning Commission agrees to have a called meeting within that remaining time because you know we have to use the 21 days for advertisement and within the 30 days, yes, we could have another meeting. Then I could render my final decision at that meeting and allow people to know what was brought up and how I interpret this law. Then if I were not sure, of course, I could provide them with the attorney's opinion on it.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

Instrument 2024-454 Book Volume 0R Page 2102 145

Councilwoman Ireland: We have heard this is a knee-jerk or a reaction to the litigation that we are currently facing. We have also heard that if we do this, we will never see another major subdivision turned down ever again. I would like to remind everyone since we are bringing up this current litigation in that property that the building Doc had put zoning on would not have allowed this current subdivision to come into it. Our Building Official did that. And he went back and further to put on a tighter zoning that would have allowed even fewer houses to come into it. It was changed because the public asked us to change the zoning and take it off. Doc put it in place to protect it against the major subdivisions. I don't think it is fair to say if we turn over the power, we are never going to be able to say no to a major subdivision again. This comes back to the planning part where I want to reiterate and encourage the planning to be happening so that things that we don't want, when we hear the citizens saying they don't want can be stopped by giving it the teeth it needs. At the end of the day though for me, this is not an issue that is objective but subjective. There is no right or wrong, there is no legal or illegal here. I don't have a problem changing this process to give our Building and Planning department this authority. But, again, I think our staff is competent. But because there was not a unanimous decision on the Planning Commission and because those dissenting votes were from members who were in my district one of which was my appointee to the Planning Commission, I will honor their votes here by voting against this.

Chairman Campbell: Council, are there any other questions or comments? Hearing none, Councilman Talbert made the motion, and Chairman Campbell seconded. The motion passed 3 to 2 with Councilwoman Ireland and Councilman Moody opposing.

3. Consideration of Approval of the Second Reading of Ordinance 21-23-784, to amend Chapter 2 Administration Section 2-21 Compensation of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances.

Chairman Campbell: Let me explain this first. This was on the agenda last month, and we discussed this with having to give a cost-of-living increase for the County Council members here for it has not been done before. In the discussion last month, Councilman Moody was going to suggest an amendment. I think it was my issue that I did not quite explain well where we were in the voting process. So, when I did that after our discussion on it, a motion was made to approve this, but there never was a second. Without a second, it was like it never happened. It did not pass and it did not fail. It is almost as if I had said we would take this as information, and take it up at the next meeting. That is the essence of what it would be. So, for fairness, I wanted to bring it back and put it on the agenda for the Council to consider. The Council can always turn it down, but I wanted to make sure that we had a fair opportunity because of my mistake in administering how we were voting on it. That is on me. With that said, we are going to take it up again tonight, and I will ask Administrator Caddell if there is anything we need to know about this since we discussed it some last time.

Administrator Caddell: At the last Council meeting I reported that our Council pay was right at the average of all counties in population group 4 based on the South Carolina Association of Counties numbers. This average was done using our 2023 numbers compared to 2022 numbers for the reporting counties. I requested and received the 2023 data from SCAC. Using the 2023 data, and Edgefield County Councilmember's salary is about \$1,000 lower than the average,

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

reflecting the fact that other counties raised pay. Again, this is why we propose tying the Council COLAs to Employee COLAs, to stay somewhere in the middle of the pack. If the Council passes this ordinance any increase must still be referenced clearly in the annual budget ordinance and would not be available to the Council until the January after a general election.

Chairman Campbell: I will open the floor for the Council's questions or comments.

Councilwoman Ireland: I would like to remind everyone that this was a huge issue when we first talked about it. When we first gave ourselves a raise way back because the Council had not had a raise in 25 years and there was much debate at that time over this issue. I said back then that I did not want us to get back into that hole where we were playing catchup after 25 years because that was a lot of an amount to catch up on. I said I would like to see us some way come up with an idea where we are not doing that anymore. I think this is the best way to do this is to loop it in so we are not playing catch-up again.

Chairman Campbell: I want to add one thing, when we discussed a pay raise, we had a public hearing with a parade of people coming up to discuss it. Not all but almost all of them said the same thing. They said if you just give yourselves an increase as you go through the years, you would not be in this pickle. You have done this to yourselves, so why not just give yourselves a cost-of-living increase or whatever percentage so you don't have this 25 years from now or any other time? So, again I was a little surprised by that but that was the consensus of most of the speakers who talked to us that night. Hence, here we are tonight.

Councilwoman Ireland: This is not us voting for ourselves a raise for tonight, which we want to make clear. This is just when we do at budget process to vote for a cost-of-living for the employees, because we are employees of the county. When we do vote for the cost-of-living increase, we will be included in it at that point. Not today.

Administrator Caddell: I would like to add one additional thing. All other elected officials who are part of the County government participate in the county cost-of-living increase.

Chairman Campbell: I think we are the only exemptions. We self-exempted ourselves years ago. I know Councilman Moody has something he wants to add.

Councilman Moody: Do I propose my amendment now?

Chairman Campbell: I have two questions. First, you wanted to make an amendment last time, so I assume you want to make an amendment this time.

Councilman Moody: Yes.

Chairman Campbell: Before we get to that point, then what I would like to do Council is ask the Council for a motion in a second to get us into the official discussion stage, so therefore we could consider an amendment. So just for purposes of discussion, is there a motion to give a second reading to ordinance 21-23-784? Councilman Talbert made the motion, and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Now under discussion, I will turn the floor over to Councilman Moody.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

Councilman Moody: I would like to propose an amendment. In my amendment, I would like a 2% max for a total of two years. For example, say that the county employees get three percent in the next budget and then two percent. So that is five percent. I want to cap it at two percent total for the two years. The most the Council will ever get is two percent regardless of what the County employees get. That is my amendment.

Chairman Campbell: For clarification, the two percent is not two percent each of the years. It is the two years combined is two percent because we cannot get a raise but every two years.

Councilman Moody: Two percent total.

Chairman Campbell: For us, it is two years because we would receive it after an election according to state law. That is Councilman Moody's amendment, and he makes that motion.

Councilwoman Ireland: I would like to discuss something first for clarification. If we do the amendment and we say there is a cap on it, but we still have to vote on it. So, if we are not on here and another set of members has been elected, they can take the cap off? Am I correct? So, every cycle, we have to reassign the cap. Am I correct with that?

Administrator Caddell: This is a stand-alone ordinance. This cap would be put in place by ordinance and it would limit what we could add to the budget ordinance.

Chairman Campbell: But a future Council could change this ordinance.

Administrator Caddell: Correct. This ordinance is separate and distinct from the budget ordinance.

Councilwoman Ireland: So, we won't have to do it again at budget time.

Administrator Caddell: At budget time we would have to indicate how much of a percent the Council would receive based on what the employees receive.

Chairman Campbell: Is there a second motion to amend this ordinance? Councilwoman Ireland seconds. Now we are in the discussion phase for this amendment only. For the amendment, I will turn it over to Councilman Moody for any other additional discussion you would like to have.

Councilman Moody: As it has been mentioned, every year during budget we have to vote to honor this ordinance, correct?

Administrator Caddell: That is correct.

Councilman Moody: Like Councilwoman Ireland said earlier, 25 years caught everybody off guard. The way I figured, two percent will keep us in the eleven-county group that we are in and I think two percent is honorable for the Council.

Chairman Campbell: Again, for clarity, because Administrator Caddell will have to write this in a very legal fashion with the attorney. Here is another example. I want to make sure that I understand what the intent of the amendment is. Let's pretend for a moment that in one year, we give the employees a half of a percent raise. Then the next year, we give them a half a percent

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

raise. That means in two years they have received a one percent raise. Do we still get two percent?

Administrator Caddell: It is capped at two percent so; you would get one percent.

Chairman Campbell: It is tied to the employees up to two percent, then it is not tied anymore.

Administrator Caddell: That is correct.

Chairman Campbell: If they got one percent one year and one percent the next year. That is two percent. We would all get the same thing in that two-year cycle.

Administrator Caddell: That is correct.

Councilwoman Ireland: But, if they got five percent, we would still only get the two percent.

Administrator Caddell: That is correct.

Chairman Campbell: If we gave the five and five, that would give employees ten percent over the two years. We still would get two percent over the two years.

Councilwoman Ireland: I just want to tell you that I did talk to an employee today about this and they shared that they would not mind us being tied in with them because it would encourage us to give the employees better wage increases. That was an employee's take on this subject.

Councilman Moody: Councilwoman Ireland you can look at it this way. The three percent we are not getting can go to the employees.

Councilwoman Ireland: I was just sharing what an employee shared with me.

Councilman Moody: That might turn the three into a four.

Councilwoman Ireland: I am fine with the cap. My goal was never to see us get into a 25-year hole again. I do not want to play that type of catch-up again. Then, that is not fair to future Council either to put them in that position that we were in. We should not have been in that position. It was not fair.

Councilman Talbert: I would like to say I would not like to get back into that predicament we were in a couple of years ago. It took a lot to try to straighten out. I do not want to go there again. If everybody agrees with the cap, then I do not have a problem.

Chairman Campbell: One last question to make sure again we are all on the same page. Let's pretend for a moment that this either passes or does not, it does not matter. It will either be a two percent cap or we are going to get one with the employees unless there is another amendment. Those are the two options. My question would be, after this ordinance passes, at the beginning or during the budget process itself, the Council could say we don't want to give ourselves two percent over the two years. We want to deny ourselves for whatever reason.

Administrator Caddell: If this amendment passes, there would be a two percent cap. There is no restriction in the Council giving themselves less. You are voting on a ceiling in this amendment.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

Instrument Book Volume Page
2024-454 OR 2102 149

Chairman Campbell: Any other questions or comments on the amendment? We are voting on the amendment only. We have already had a motion and a second on the amendment and discussion. Motion passed unanimously for the cap. The amendment passes, and we are back to the main motion which is the second reading of ordinance 21-23-784. Any questions or comments on the ordinance as is? Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Consideration of Approval of a revised Building and Planning fee schedule and link the square footage valuation of construction to the International Code Council's Building Valuation Data Service.

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

Administrator Caddell: We propose to update the Building and Planning Fee schedule primarily in terms of land development and reinspection fees, but most importantly we want to index the price per square foot valuation to the International Code Council values published every three years. Our current single-family residence value per square foot is \$88. The ICC value is \$130. The current \$88 value comes nowhere close to the current cost of construction. The Building and Permit fee should collect enough to fund a substantial portion of operations. For a while they did, but over the last few years, we have fallen behind on the operation cost of our Building and Planning Department. That has a lot to do with the amount of construction and the cost.

Chairman Campbell: For clarity, the International Code is something that we have always used or been tied to?

Assistant Administrator Clark: The International Code Council is the entity who writes the codes for the states and then the state adopts it. The 2021 International Residential Code or International Building is then adopted by the state. However, the state does not adopt any of the appendices such as fee schedules. That is left up to the local jurisdiction to determine. The reasoning for that is there is no way for them on the state level to know what the needs of each building department are to set those fees. Other than the appendices, the state adopts the code, and we then have to adopt the rest. This fee schedule is one of the appendices of our state building code.

Chairman Campbell: This fee schedule is what a developer or contractor or someone pays to build something.

Assistant Administrator Clark: Most of our larger contractors will hand me a contract signed by the buyer that says this is what they are paying. But, oftentimes, smaller contractors or contractors who are from out of state will give their bill cost instead of their complete construction contract. This says that you cannot calculate your cost per square foot on your contract for less than this amount. If you brought in for example plans to build a 5,000-square-foot house for \$80,000, all I can do is times that by \$88. This just increases that minimum to what the International Code Council says. The International Code Council schedule is broken

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

Instrument 2024-454 Book Volume OR 2102 Page 150

down by type of construction and what the building's use is so you will have occupancy and type of construction. It is a long chart that gets updated on the national level every three years, which is why I recommend that we adopt it. The current \$88 was probably approved in the 1980s or 1990s and had never been looked at again until now.

Chairman Campbell: Council, questions, or comments.

Councilman Moody: Is this thing automatically updated yearly so we won't be using the 1988 fee schedule?

Assistant Administrator Clark: It will update every three years. They will put out a new edition of it and that will automatically update. Now, our other fees on the schedule will still have to come back to the Council for updates. For instance, since I am doubling the reinspection fees is one of my recommendations. If I wanted to double them again in the future, then I would have to come back again, and the Council would have to approve that individually. The only other major change in there is I added the \$10 Administration Fee to planning items. As of right now, they only apply to building items. Our administration fee is to pay for the software in our office of which the planning uses it just as much as the building. Yet, we charge the administration fee on planning items. If somebody comes in with a major subdivision, they are not paying that fee. But if you come to build a deck on your house, you are paying that fee. I am just trying to make it even across the board that everyone is paying that fee. Then, I increased the cost of subdivision plat approvals across the board because we are behind on it. Then, I also added a communication towers fee.

Chairman Campbell: Question or comments from the Council. Councilman Moody made the motion, and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of Approval of Resolution 23-24-002 to Extinguish Reversionary Rights to the Former Manor House Property.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to explain this.

Administrator Caddell: We have prepared a quit claim deed to transfer the Manor House property back to Christie Culbreath per the Council's decision back in May 2023. She has purchased this property to renovate. We are asking the Council to pass this Resolution to eliminate any reversionary rights of the County for this property, meaning that she will own it free and clear without condition.

Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from the Council.

Councilwoman Ireland: I will say I was sitting out there when this first came up many meetings ago. This was approved with this stipulation attached to it, and I remember thinking we had done that before and why was this done. I had asked around and I do not think this was ever done before. I think this was a precedent-setting where we put this clause in there not sure why it got

stuck in there. It is not doing us any good because we do not want that building and all the trouble it is going to bring to come back to us. So, for me, it makes sense to just do this. I had never seen this in anything we had done before. It was a weird little clause that got put in there. We are letting go of liability issues. But she will still be accountable for following all of our guidelines for this. I again, want to say this process seems to have been dragged out for a long time with this building. I really hope she gets this facility built. I want to see that out there, so I hope we can get some movement on that. But yes, I'd like to take us out of the equation.

Chairman Campbell: Any other questions or comments from the Council? Hearing none, Councilman Talbert made the motion, and Councilwoman Ireland 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.

Report By County Council Members

Councilman Moody: I would to thank our County Planner, April Morgan for helping a constituent get their roll back taxes explained. The citizen was having a hard time getting them explained. I called Assistant Administrator Clark for assistance. He said for me to call April who spent countless hours getting this man's problem resolved.

County Administrator's Report

- 1 Bettis Park – The new restroom facilities and press box are being constructed now. We expect completion in about 2 months. The picnic shelter will begin in February. Baseball field infield refurbishment will be completed in March. Playground equipment will be delivered in March.
- 2 Scout Park – The shelter and playground will be delivered in early March. I am in discussions with both dance and martial arts instructors to offer various rec programs in this facility.
- 3 Law Enforcement Centr – The LEC is on schedule and is really taking shape.
- 4 Website – Foster Crowder has been updating individual department pages on the website. He is doing a great job with that.
- 5 Firefighter Level I – We have 16 firefighters enrolled in the Level I class that will start this month. These students will receive a training stipend that was approved by the Council during the budget. This is part of our initiative to ensure well-trained firemen in the county. Previous training has included medical response and hazardous materials.
- 6 Budget packets will go out to department heads and elected officials in about a week so that we can begin development of the 2024/25 budget.

Assistant Administrator's Report

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

Instrument 2024-454 Book Volume 0R Page 2102 152

The state gets a monthly census from the Building and Planning Department for the school and road system so they know how much construction is going on. I don't typically provide that on a month-by-month basis to the Council. This year at the close of 2023, I wanted to put all of that data in one booklet so if you all get any kind of questions about growth, trends, number of buildings built, and locations, you can find that answer in this booklet. They will be passed out to you at the end of the meeting.

Councilwoman Ireland: I would like to recognize the Building and Planning Department for one, winning the employee door decorating contest over the Christmas holidays. If you all did not see that door, you all missed out. They had a working snow globe on that door. Would we expect anything less from you all? No. It was amazing.

Assistant Administrator Clark: Other than giving my blessing, I had nothing to do with it. They are very artistic in my office, and I just stay out of the way and try not to get run over.

Comments by County Council Chairman

I have just a few items.

First, thank you for re-electing me as Chairman. I appreciate the confidence you are showing in me. I am starting my 14th consecutive year on County Council, and tonight marks the 10th time I've been elected as Chairman. I'm very humbled and very eager to serve. I encourage you to continue to reach out to me and each other as we work together for the citizens of Edgefield County.

Second, I want to recognize tonight our Clerk to Council Aretha Eubanks. Tomorrow, she celebrates her two-year anniversary as our Clerk. Congratulations to her!

Finally, I want to announce that we have the annual Edgefield County Intergovernmental Meeting on January 29, 5:30 p.m., at the Edgefield County Senior Citizens Center dining room. It's a time where we learn what many other organizations are doing in the County, and how we can work together to support other elected and appointed officials.

Also, I know we all wish for every one of our citizens a happy and prosperous New Year

Adjourn

Council, there being no other business to conduct tonight, I'd entertain a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Ireland made the motion, and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:03 PM.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

January 2, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

Instrument Book Volume Page
2024-454 OR 2102 153

Edgefield County Council



Dean Campbell, Council Chairman

ATTEST



Aretha Eubanks, Clerk to Council