

MINUTES
LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL
March 12, 2013
Council Chambers, Laurens County Court House

Members Present: Chairman James Coleman; Vice Chairman Edward McDaniel; Council Members Diane Anderson, Ted Nash, David Pitts, Keith Tollison and Joe Wood

Staff Present: County Attorney Alexander Cruickshanks and County Administrator Ernest Segars

Press Present: Reporter for WLBG Radio; Cory Ingle, Laurens County Advertiser; Vic McDonald, Clinton Chronicle

Chairman James Coleman called the March 12, 2013 meeting of Laurens County Council to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Laurens County Court House. Councilman Keith Tollison delivered the Invocation and all participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA - On a motion by Councilman Nash and a second by Councilman Wood, Council agreed on a unanimous vote (7-0) to approve the agenda for the March 12, 2013 meeting of Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 26, 2013 MEETING OF LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL - On a motion by Vice Chairman McDaniel and a second by Councilman Tollison, Council approved the Minutes of the February 26, 2013 meeting on a unanimous vote (7-0.)

PUBLIC HEARING, LAURENS COUNTY ORDINANCE # 749, "AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AND UNIFOR BRASS FORGINGS, INCORPORATED, UNDER TITLE 4, CHAPTER 12 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA; CONSENTING TO AN EXTENSION OF THE TERM THEREOF AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO." - Chairman called the public hearing to order at 5:35 p.m. No one wished to address the issue and Chairman Coleman closed the hearing at 5:36 p.m.

THIRD READING, LAURENS COUNTY ORDINANCE #749 - Council Member Anderson made a motion to approve the Ordinance on third and final reading. Councilman Tollison offered a second to the motion.

Councilman Pitts requested more information on the "variable rate" for the Fee in Lieu of Taxes during the final 10m years of the Fee arrangement. Attorney Cruickshanks explained that the Fee would be assessed at a fixed rate for the first 20 years of the Fee arrangement. During the final 10 years of the

Fee schedule, the company will be subject to a variable rate based on county property tax assessments. During the final 10 years of the Fee Schedule, the fee rate will be addressed in five-year increments.

SECOND READING APPROVAL, LAURENS COUNTY ORDINANCE #750, "AN ORINANCE FOR THE PURCHASE OF APPROXIAMENTELY FIVE (5) ACRES OF PROPERTY ON AIRPORT (Torrington) ROAD." - Councilman Pitts made a motion to approve the Ordinance on second reading. Council member Anderson offered a second to the motion. In response to a question from Councilman Tollison, Administrator Segars said that the funds for the purchase of the property will come from the proceeds of airport operations. Chairman Coleman said the purchase of the property will allow the Laurens County Airport to comply with approach and boundary regulations established by state and federal regulatory agencies.

Council approved Ordinance # 749 on a unanimous vote (7-0.)

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION # 2013-04, "MARCH, 2013, DISABILITIES MONTH." - On a motion by Mr. Tollison and a second by Mr. Wood, Council approved the attached Resolution of Support for the Laurens County Disabilities and Special Needs Board on a unanimous vote (7-0.)

Mr. Jason Tavernor, the Executive Director of the Laurens County DDS Board, thanked Council on behalf of the "500 families" in the county served by the Board. He also said that a primary goal of the DDS Board is to secure a facility in the Clinton area so that services can be expanded area of the county.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT - Ernest Segars, Laurens County Administrator:

- Laurens County Comprehensive Plan, Public Hearing, Third Reading, County Ordinance # 748 - Administrator Segars said that a public hearing and third and final reading of the Laurens County Comprehensive Plan has been scheduled for March 26, 2013. The administrative staff has added specific timelines for the goals and objectives included in the Plan. Mr. Segars requested that Council members review these timelines prior to third reading and to contact the staff with any questions or comments.

- COMPLETION OF THE 2012 FINANCIAL STATEMENT, LAURENS COUNTY - Administrator Segars reported to Council that the staff has received a draft of the referenced statement and the county Finance Director and the County Administrator are reviewing the document. Mr. Segars said that there has been a delay in the delivery of the report and those issues are under review. The Administrator did report that, according to the draft Financial Report, Laurens County remains in a very good fiscal position, with a fund balance of approximately nine million dollars.

The county's external auditors will meet with Council on March 26 to discuss the 2012 Financial Statement.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- 1.) Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety- Committee Chairman Tollison reported that the Director of the Johnson Detention Center, Captain Chris Hudson, is continuing to work a plan for more equitable compensation for detention officers. The Committee will meet to discuss this issue but no meeting has been scheduled.
- 2.) Committee on Public Works- Committee Chairman Joe Wood said that the Committee met on March 6, 2013 with Architect Dennis Ashley and members of the staff to discuss preliminary plans for the construction of new office space adjacent to the Hillcrest Square facility. The Committee had requested comments on the proposal from department directors whose offices are currently housed in the county's Church Street Office Complex. The Finance Director and the Director of Human Resources submitted comments and Mr. Ashley advised the Committee that he can make a slight change in the plans to accommodate the departmental requests and concerns.

In another area of discussion, the Committee requested that Mr. Ashley review the current configuration of the Hillcrest Square facility and the current location of the Laurens County Magistrates' Office. The magistrates are currently housed in relatively small office suite near the main entrance to Hillcrest Square and the area often becomes congested as persons visit the office to pay fines.

Mr. Ashley will meet with the county magistrates to determine whether current space in Hillcrest Square could be modified to accommodate their needs. Administrator Segars also stated that he has requested a fee proposal from Mr. Ashley to accommodate the additional work that he has been requested to perform on behalf of the county.

The Committee also briefly discussed the possible construction of a new terminal building for the Laurens County Airport. Councilman Wood said that the Committee members agreed by Consensus that this is not a project that the Laurens County should undertake at this time.

- 3.) **AD-HOC COMMITTEE- "IT" PROGRAM** - Committee Chairman Tollison said that the Committee met on February 26, 2013 to discuss the county's various computer systems and procedural and programmatic steps that the county could take to centralize some computer functions. The county's IT consultant, Jim Anderson, and several department heads also met with the Committee.

Mr. Anderson has provided an initial cost estimate for the modifications described above that the Committee to discuss at its next meeting. The staff has also provided for Council's review a draft Computer and Internet Use Policy that the Committee will discuss at an upcoming meeting.

FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Coleman opened the period for public comment at 6 p.m. A number of persons attended the meeting to express their opposition to the proposed location of two (2) poultry operations on Poole Town Road in the Sandy Springs Community. Those appearing before Council include the following:

- 1.) Attorney Josh Smith from Greenville, representing a group of property owners who are opposed to the location of the poultry operations.
- 2.) Attorney Robert Whitesides of Laurens, who also represents nearby property owners who are opposed.
- 3.) Chip Jenkins - a property owner in the area who is opposed to the poultry operations.
- 4.) Rick Still - a property owners opposed to the poultry operations
- 5.) Deborah Wallace - a property owner in opposition to the location of the poultry operations.

Those speaking in opposition to the location of the poultry operations stated that, over a period of time, as many as 1.5 million chickens would be located in the houses, producing some 3.5 million pounds of waste. They stated that as many as 500 county residents are in close proximity to the proposed location and some of these residents suffer from asthma and other breathing disorders. The poultry operations will affect these persons.

Participants in the Public Comment also pointed out that the poultry houses will create a foul odor, increase the amount of ammonia and other harmful substances that could affect air and water quality and degrade property values for persons who have built homes in the area.

The participants requested that Council issue a moratorium, prohibiting the construction of any additional poultry houses in Laurens County until the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control has sufficient time to review the possible impact of the construction of the houses.

Several members of Council expressed their concern for residents of the area but Council agreed generally that Laurens County does not have a legal basis for the declaration of a moratorium. The county does not have any land use regulations in place prohibiting the location of agricultural operations at any location in the unincorporated areas of the county. Two members of Council, David Pitts and Diane Anderson, said that they would support meaningful land use regulations in Laurens County.

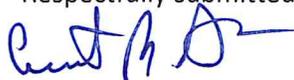
Chairman Coleman said that the concerned residents should continue their efforts with SC DHEC to stop the construction of the poultry houses, if that is the will of the property owners in the area.

The Public Comment period was closed at 6:35 p.m.

In final business, Administrator Segars reported to Council on recent threatening and anonymous and threatening letters received by officials of School Districts 55 and 56 and Presbyterian College Investigations are still underway and local law enforcement agencies, including the Laurens County Sheriff's Office, are providing on-premise security for both public and private schools in the county.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ernest B. Segars
Laurens County Administrator