

MINUTES
LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 11, 2014 – 5:30 P.M.
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE – COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - PUBLIC SQUARE

ATTENDANCE: **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT** - County Council Chairman Jim Coleman and Vice Chairman Edward McDaniel; Council Members, Diane Anderson, David Pitts, Ted Nash, Keith Tollison and Joe Wood.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: Laurens County Administrator, Ernest Segars; Laurens County Clerk to Council, Betty C. Walsh and Sandy Cruickshanks, Laurens County Attorney.

ATTENDING - LAURENS COUNTY DEPARTMENT HEADS: Laurens County Public Works Director, Scott Holland.

PRESS: *The Laurens County Advertiser*, Corey Engle and Iva Cadmus, WLBG-Radio.

SCHEDULED SESSION AGENDA ITEMS – (1) Approval of Agenda, February 11, 2014; (2) Approval of Minutes from the January 28, 2014 Regular Session; (3.) Public Hearing, Laurens County Ordinance #761 – “Authorizing the Conversion of an Existing Fee In Lieu Of Tax Arrangement Between Laurens County and Fisher Barton Into a Simplified Fee Type of Fee In Lieu Of Tax Arrangement For the Property Subject to The Original Fee In Lieu of Tax”; (4.) Second Reading, Laurens County Ordinance #761 – “Authorizing the Conversion of an Existing Fee In Lieu Of Tax Arrangement Between Laurens County and Fisher Barton Into a Simplified Fee Type of Fee In Lieu Of Tax Arrangement For the Property Subject to The Original Fee In Lieu of Tax”; (5) Public Hearing, Laurens County Ordinance #762 – An Ordinance which will authorize the execution and delivery of an amended Fee In Lieu of Tax Agreement by Laurens County with an existing Fountain Inn Industry; (6) Second Reading, Laurens County Ordinance #762 – An Ordinance which will authorize the execution and delivery of an amended Fee In Lieu of Tax Agreement by Laurens County with an existing Fountain Inn Industry; (7) Public Hearing, Laurens County Ordinance #763 – An Ordinance which will amend an existing Multi County Park Agreement with an existing Fountain Inn Industry; (8) Second Reading, Laurens County Ordinance #763 – An Ordinance which will amend an existing Multi County Park Agreement with an existing Fountain Inn Industry; (9) Funding Requests: A.) City of Laurens – Removal of a dilapidated building - 133 East Main Street – Mayor Brownlee; B.) Paving assistance - rear parking lot at the Center for Advanced Manufacturing – Dr. Ray Brooks; (10) Laurens County Rural ISO Report - Greg Lindley, Director, Laurens County Fire Service; (11) Requested Resolution - “A Resolution in Support of Transportation Options For the State of South Carolina” – Mr. Phil Astwood, Carolinas Association For Passenger Trains; (12) Second Reading, Laurens County Ordinance #764 – “An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance #751 For the Transfer And Conveyance of All Public Alleys and Alleyways To the Laurens Commission of Public Works”; (13) Briefing - Proposed Solid Waste & Recycling monitoring – Scott Holland, Director, Laurens County Department of Public Works; (14) Administrative Report – Ernie Segars, County Administrator; (15) Public Comment; (16) Comments from Council Members; (17) Adjournment.

MEETING NOTIFICATION - The County Council Members, Press and requested public notifications were informed of the meeting in a timely and appropriate manner.

CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Coleman called the February 11, 2014 regular scheduled meeting of Council to order at 5:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers of the Laurens County Historic Courthouse.

Chairman Coleman offered an invitation to stand for the invocation and for the Pledge of Allegiance. The invocation was delivered by Councilman Nash.

APPROVAL – AGENDA – FEBRUARY 11, 2014 – Upon a MOTION from VICE CHAIRMAN MCDANIEL and a SECOND from COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON for discussion.

DELETIONS:

- 1.) **Ordinance changes** - Chairman Coleman stated that the following Ordinances were not up for public hearing at this time but a second reading on the Ordinances would be held as scheduled;
 - a.) Public Hearing Laurens County Ordinance #762 – An Ordinance which will authorize the execution and delivery of an amended Fee In Lieu of Tax Agreement by Laurens County with an existing Fountain Inn Industry.
 - b.) Public Hearing - Laurens County Ordinance #763 – An Ordinance which will amend an existing Multi County Park Agreement with an existing Fountain Inn Industry.
- 2.) **Resolution changes** - Also postponed was the requested Resolution for “Passenger Trains” until the February 25, 2014 meeting of Council.

ADDITIONS:

- 1.) Executive Session – one (1) Economic Development Project and one (1) personnel matter.

The agenda was approved with noted deletions and additions; VOTE 7-0.

APPROVAL – MINUTES – JANUARY 28, 2014 – REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL – Upon a MOTION from COUNCILMAN TOLLISON and a SECOND from COUNCILMAN PITTS, the minutes from the January 28, 2014 meeting was approved as presented; VOTE 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARING – ORDINANCE #761 – “AUTHORIZING THE CONVERSION OF AN EXISTING FEE IN LIEU OF TAX ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN LAURENS COUNTY AND FISCHER BARTON INTO A SIMPLIFIED FEE TYPE OF FEE IN LIEU OF TAX ARRANGEMENT FOR THE PROPERTY SUBJECT TO THE ORIGINAL FEE IN LIEU OF TAX” – Chairman Coleman opened the Public Hearing at 5:32 P.M. With no one wishing to address the Ordinance, Chairman Coleman closed the Public Hearing at 5:33 P.M.

As a point of clarification, County Attorney Cruickshanks stated that Mr. Jim Price, the representing attorney for Fisher Barton, is not in attendance due to being snowed in. And, that this Ordinance will modify their existing Fee In Lieu Of Tax Arrangement; all due to some confusion as to whether the they had met their investment goals. It has been determined that although there may have been a technical shortage during one period, the overall investments of the company have exceeded their investment commitments.

SECOND READING – ORDINANCE #761 – “AUTHORIZING THE CONVERSION OF AN EXISTING FEE IN LIEU OF TAX ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN LAURENS COUNTY AND FISCHER BARTON INTO A SIMPLIFIED FEE TYPE OF FEE IN LIEU OF TAX ARRANGEMENT FOR THE PROPERTY SUBJECT TO THE ORIGINAL FEE IN LIEU OF TAX - COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve Ordinance #761 upon second reading as presented, with VICE CHAIRMAN MCDANIEL SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

CANCELLED - PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE #762 – “AN ORDINANCE WHICH WILL AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF AN AMENDED FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT BY LAURENS COUNTY WITH AN EXISTING FOUNTAIN INN INDUSTRY”.- This Ordinance was not scheduled to hold a public hearing at this time.

SECOND READING - ORDINANCE #762 – “AN ORDINANCE WHICH WILL AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF AN AMENDED FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT BY LAURENS COUNTY WITH AN EXISTING FOUNTAIN INN INDUSTRY” – Upon a MOTION from COUNCILMAN PITTS and a SECOND from COUNCILMAN NASH, Council VOTED 7-0 to approve Ordinance #762 upon second reading.

POSTPHONED - PUBLIC HEARING – ORDINANCE #763 – “AN ORDINANCE WHICH WILL AMEND AN EXISTING MULTI COUNTY PARK AGREEMENT WITH AN EXISTING FOUNTAIN INN INDUSTRY” - This Ordinance was not scheduled to hold a public hearing at this time.

SECOND READING – ORDINANCE #763 – “AN ORDINANCE WHICH WILL AMEND AN EXISTING MULTI COUNTY PARK AGREEMENT WITH AN EXISTING FOUNTAIN INN INDUSTRY” – Upon a MOTION from COUNCILMAN NASH made the MOTION to approve Ordinances #762 and #763 as presented with COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

FUNDING REQUESTS – Administrator Segars reviewed the following two (2) requests and noted that both could be funded through the Hunter Industrial Fund. Chairman Coleman noted that the Hunter Funds currently consisted of six hundred sixty one thousand seven hundred thirty thousand dollars (\$661,730).

a.) **CITY OF LAURENS – REMOVAL OF DILAPIDATED BUILDING - 133 EAST MAIN STREET:**



Laurens City Mayor, Sharon Brownlee, is requesting funding assistance from Laurens County for the removal of a dilapidated building located on the Public Square at 133 East Main Street. The estimated cost of the demolition totals seventy eight thousand, seven hundred fifty dollars (\$78,750). The City is requesting a fifty/fifty (50-50) split on the project with the County’s portion totaling thirty nine thousand three hundred twenty five dollars (\$39,325).

COUNCILMAN PITTS made the MOTION for Council to approve assisting in the demolition using the Hunter Park Industrial Funds and to not exceed the thirty nine thousand three hundred twenty five dollars (\$39,325). COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDING for discussion.

Councilman Tollison asked what is the proposal for the property once the demolition is completed? Mayor Brownlee said, “This project was somewhat forced on us and we have taken every step possible to require the owners to take responsibility. We have also considered everything we could to get the building down. We have no further use for the property therefore no grants are available to assist. Our plans are to take the space down, grass it and plant Leland Cyprus’, using it as green space until something further comes along. It is not our goal to use it for anything other than to clean up that corner and reduce public danger”.

Councilman Tollison asked, if the property is put up for sale, will the county receive any of the proceeds of the sale for our initial investment in the demolition? Chairman Coleman stated that language such as that could be put into the form of an agreement. Mayor Brownlee said, “We have no desire for any financial gain or control

from the property. I just want to get it down. I am sure that whatever kind of agreement we come to that some form of agreement at that time of sale could be possible”.

Councilman Tollison asked if the bid process had already been conducted since there were estimated costs. Mayor Brownlee replied, “We will put it out for additional bids. We had the NEO Corporation, the firm that recently took the building down in Greenville, to give us a proposed cost estimate to bring the building down. I would like to think that the County would see this as an economic development advantage as it is an eyesore to the County seat”.

Councilman Nash stated, “I do have a problem with giving monies to the Cities as they all have dilapidated buildings. We have provided funds for the paving of City parking lots. We set a precedence each time we hand out tax payer monies to the Cities. I don’t think the taxpayers of Laurens County should foot the bill when the needs arise and we are asked to help fund”.

Councilman Wood stated, “This is the same situation as Gray Court had several years ago and we did not give them any funds to do so. I have to ask this, if you can not afford to bring this building down, how can you afford to spend three million dollars (\$3,000,000) on a spec building, on pure speculations? And, do you think that the building can successfully be separated from the other buildings in the area?” Mayor Brownlee replied that the whole building will be coming down and it is not attached to any other buildings.

Councilman Wood asked about the present ownership of the building. Mayor Brownlee replied that the liens have been signed over and we have not closed on it yet. Chairman Coleman inserted that the building had been foreclosed on with no one wanting the responsibilities of the building.

Chairman Coleman went on to say that the spec building referenced and this building needing to be demolished were two (2) separate entities. The spec building has been put on hold because they do not have the funds for it right now.

Councilman Wood said, “I do not see this as being economic development and can not see the economic development funds being used”.

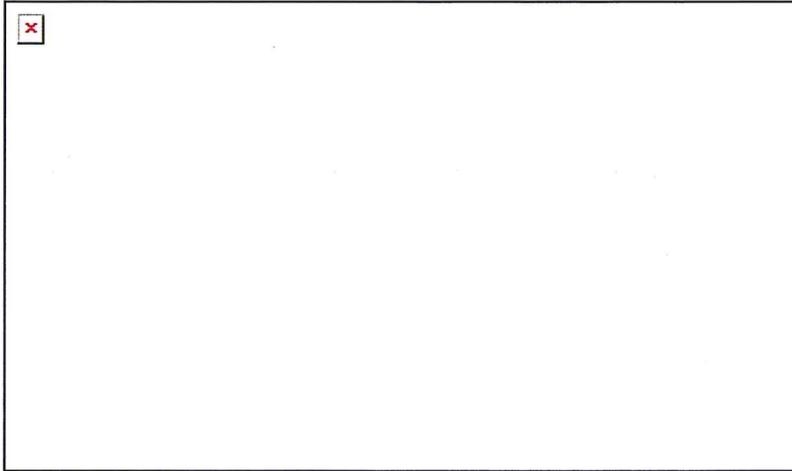
Vice Chairman McDaniel asked if in the event that the property would be sold, would there be any reimbursement of funds to the County and stated that the City of Laurens has in place now, a fee for this demolition that is proposed to generate fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). Mayor Brownlee replied that the City did have a fee in place and that it was only for one (1) year.

Councilman Pitts stated that he would like to clarify the earlier motion. Is it interpreted to mean that it would be a fifty / fifty (50/50) split based on the low bid and not to exceed the thirty nine thousand three hundred twenty five dollars (\$39,325). Attorney Cruickshanks replied that the motion did state exactly what Councilman Pitts just stated but it does not include the recovery of funds

AMENDING his earlier MOTION, COUNCILMAN PITTS asked that the motion include the recovery amount should the property be sold by the City of Laurens with those funds place back in to the Hunter Industrial Fund Account. COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON ACCEPTED the amended motion.

COUNCIL VOTED 6-0-1. Chairman Coleman abstained.

b.) PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE – CENTER FOR ADVANCED MANUFACTURING
PARKING LOT PAVING ASSISTANCE



Public Works Director Scott Holland made the presentation to Council of the proposed estimate for the funding requested towards the Piedmont Technical College project. The source of funding would be the County maintained Economic Development Fund commonly referred to as the “Hunter Industrial Park Fund”.

Mr. Holland went on to declare that the curbing and shoulders were not a part of this project with Laurens County and is just an estimate based on the drawing

provided by Piedmont Technical College. The front parking lot expansion is being conducted by Mr. Joe Ben Hunter of H&H Construction. Mr. Hunter reviewed the proposed plan and provided an estimate of ninety six thousand five hundred dollars (\$96,500) to be used as a generic budget figure to accomplish the project.

Specifications: six (6) inch compacted stone base over graded and compacted soil base in parking lot and entrance; six (6) inch concrete on graded compacted soil base; two (2) inch thickness asphalt surfacing on parking and drive area; four (4) inch white striping on all parking spaces; four (4) inch blue striping on handicapped with handicapped symbols; blue no parking striping in space between handicap spaces. Approximate

Quantities: stone base 4,623 SY; Asphalt 4,623 SY; Concrete 304 SY; Grading and site prep 4,927 SY; four (4) inch white striping 1,947 ft; four (4) inch blue striping 110 ft; four inch diagonal blue striping 200 square foot area; handicap symbols (two)

Councilman Wood asked an amount to not exceed could not be defined. Chairman Coleman said, “I think that if the County can appropriate the one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), Piedmont Tec could raise the rest of the money if more is needed. We are going forth with a good faith effort to help again”.

Representing Piedmont Tec, Mr. Chad Teague said, “We would more than appreciate any assistance from the County. We do have other options such as using programs at the college. This will add sixty two (62) spaces to the facility. We are adding an additional thirteen thousand square feet (13,000 sf) as a welding facility with a megatronics program. As to use of the facility, there were twenty six (26) different agencies that used the facility last year; three (3) job fairs; both of the local high schools use the facility too. Our phase two is proposed to be complete by the end of March”.

COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve the funding for the parking lot at the facility using the Hunter Industrial Funds for the actual cost of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), and to not exceed that amount. VICE CHAIRMAN MCDANIEL SECONDING for discussion.

Councilman Pitts questioned what would Piedmont Tec be contributing towards this project? Mr. Teague replied, “We currently do not have any funds allocated yet. But do have plans to use Tec classes to administer the curbing”.

Councilman Pitts stated that we allocated one hundred thousand dollars a year and a half ago towards this center. This center has been a great thing for this County and I support it. We also provide ninety percent (90%) for operating expenses to Piedmont Technical College on an annual basis. My personal belief is that this should be some type of split among the County and Piedmont Technical College for this paving of a parking lot. I do see a need for it”.

Chairman Coleman asked what Piedmont Tec was spending towards phase two? Mr. Teague replied that eight hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$850,000) not to include equipment and a total of close to two million dollars on this phase two project. There is a phase three called the C-PIP program that is planned in the future.

Councilman Wood stated that he could not see where two million dollars could be spent on a building that was already in place and asked where four hundred three square yards of concrete would be poured. Mr. Teague stated that that was for sidewalks.

Councilman Tollison stated that in the literature provided, he did not actually see a request from Piedmont Tec for any amount of money that the only request is coming from Mr. Holland. Chairman Coleman stated that the request came to us and we provided the estimate.

Councilman Tollison questioned the sign on the property that says “state property”. Mr. Teague replied, “It is foundation property. The College Foundation purchased the building with a five (5) year lease that is with the College; which is all state property”.

COUNCIL VOTED 7-0 to approve the allocation of up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the parking lot at the Center for Advanced Manufacturing.

LAURENS COUNTY ISO REPORT – LAURENS COUNTY RURAL FIRE SERVICE - Greg Lindley, Director, Laurens County Fire Service presented Council with the new Insurance Service Office (ISO) reports recently received.

Mr. Lindley said, “For about eighteen(18) months we have been working on reducing ISO ratings for the majority of the Laurens County Rural Fire District. This is a grade that does not affect the Cities of Laurens and Clinton, nor the Town of Fountain Inn. This is only rural fire departments. This is a tremendous achievement and I am pleased to present this report as it will be a big tax savings for the people of Laurens County. This is an insurance rating system established by the ISO and the level of fire protection residents have in a given location. This has reduced the overall county rating to a Class Five (5). We are just above a Class four (4), which is the lowest you can go for a residential area,”

Public Classification Types – 1-9

Single Class – If a single class, the classification applies to all properties in the community or district.

Split Class – Applies to all properties within a five road mile of a fire station and within one thousand feet of a fire hydrant or water supply.

Class 8B or Class 9 – Applies to all properties beyond one thousand feet of a fire hudrant but within five road miles of a fire station.

Class 10 – Applies to all properties over five road miles from a fire station

Department	Old ISO Ratings	New ISO Ratings
Clinton	4/9	4/9
Cross Hill	6/9	5
Durbin Creek	6	5
Ekorn	6	5
Fountain Inn	5/9	5/9
Gray Court	6/10	5/10
Greenpond	5	5
Hickory Tavern	7/10	5/10
Joanna	3/9	5
Laurens City	2	2
Laurens County	4/9	5
Mountville	8/9	5
Renno	7/10	5/10
Sandy Springs	7/10	5
Waterloo	6/10	5/10
Western Laurens	6	5
Youngs	6/10	5/10

Mr. Lindley said, “Class nine areas remaining are the Clinton and Fountain Inn contract areas and the split rates are based on hydrant systems and not water shuttle. Class ten areas are Hickory Tavern (Lake Rabon Estates) Waterloo (Deer Valley Road), Youngs and Gray Court Districts, Clinton Fire District (County areas). The only fix for the class ten areas is to build more stations within five miles. Using a scale of one to ten, residential areas fall under four to ten, with four as good and ten as the lowest level of a protection rating. Again the City of Laurens and Clinton have their own fire departments; they are separate entities in regards to ISO ratings”

Referring to page five of the handout, Councilman Pitts questioned 571 – credit for company personnel being at a 2.15 versus a 15; is that because you do not have enough personnel? Mr. Lindley replied, “Because in ISO standards one (1) paid person equals five (5) volunteers. Our county grade averaged twelve (12) volunteers on an average structure fire. They then divide the twelve by three resulting in an average of four. The only way to increase this number is to hire more people or to increase more volunteers”.

Councilman Pitts asked for more detail on the 581 – training. Mr. Lindley said, “We really suffered on this one because we do not have a fixed training facility. We got training points but not what we could have gotten if we had a training facility. This ISO rating now gives us a plan to focus on as we grow.”.

Chairman Coleman stated that the County needs four (4) more stations to bring some of the area ratings down.

Referring to building more stations, Councilman Tollison asked if built and equipped would they be required to be manned? Mr. Lindley replied that the areas Council would need to man would be in the Youngs and Gray Court.

Councilman Tollison questioned if a special tax district could be implemented should Council be pressed to build more fire stations? Chairman Coleman replied that a special fire tax district is already in place.

Councilman Nash questioned the stipends given to the volunteers. Mr. Lindley replied that a volunteer is provided a tax rebate on the vehicle used by the fire fighter

POSTPONED – REQUESTED RESOLUTION - “A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PASSENGER TRAIN TRANSPORTATION FOR THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA” – This agenda item was again delayed due to the winter weather conditions.

SECOND READING – ORDINANCE #764 – “AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE #751 FOR THE TRANSFER AND CONVEYANCE OF ALL PUBLIC ALLEYS AND ALLEYWAYS TO THE LAURENS COMMISSION OF PUBLIC WORKS” - Attorney Cruickshanks stated that this ordinance involves an alleyway that was omitted from the 1948 deed that transferred said property to the County. A separate deed was implemented in 1949. The previous Laurens County Ordinance #751 only included the 1948 transactions. To keep the recordings in order, this amending Ordinance #764 will include the one alleyway.

COUNCILMAN TOLLISON made the MOTION to approve Ordinance #764 as submitted with COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

BRIEFING – PROPOSED SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING MONITORING PROGRAM - Scott Holland, Director, Laurens County Department of Public Works briefed Council on a proposed vehicle sticker program for consideration towards monitoring usage of the greenbox stations within the County.

Mr. Holland said, “We operate ten (10) county solid waste and recycling sites and the need for the attendants to monitor the use of the sites assuring that only Laurens County residents are using the disposal sites as waste generated in Laurens County. Persons who own residential properties in Laurens County would be provided a decal to post in their windows upon proof of residency. We do not need to be paying for the disposal of out of county waste”.

Councilman Wood said, “I honestly do not see this as out of control. This should be an effort by all County’s to keep litter off of the side of the roads. Using that attendant to police this, you are only asking for trouble. If turned away they will only throw it off on the roadways”.

COUNCILMAN NASH made the MOTION to approve the decal program with the greenbox sites. COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDING for discussion.

Councilman Tollison said, “I support this program and will vote in favor or but, I would like to know a number that could prove the overrun of garbage from other counties. These stations are isolated and could be dangerous; I ask is it worth reducing the conflict”. Mr. Holland replied that the attendants avoid any confutations by those wishing to deposit waste at the site.

VOTE 6-1 (Councilman Wood was in opposition).

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT – ERNIE SEGARS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR - Administrator Segars briefed Council on the current closure status of the County Government Offices on Wednesday due to weather conditions and accumulations of snow and ice

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Chairman Coleman opened the floor for public comments at 6:50 P.M. Having no one present wishing to address Council, Chairman Coleman closed the session at 6:51 P.M.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Wood referencing the search for Mr. Garrett in the Princeton area expressed his observation of the Command Station that was brought on the scene from Greenville County and how it proved to be a useful tool for the services rendered during the search. Councilman Wood asked for Council to seriously consider this as an equipment need for Laurens County.

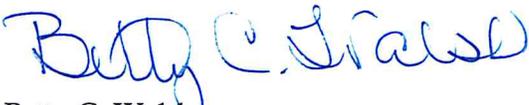
EXECUTIVE SESSION – COUNCILMAN PITTS made the MOTION for Council to move into executive Session to discuss an economic development matter and an employment matter at 6:52 PM. COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

There was a COUNCIL CONSENSUS to reconvene in open session at 7:10 P.M.

Chairman Coleman reported that no action was taken on either matter.

ADJOURNMENT – With no further business, Chairman Coleman adjourned the meeting of Council at 7:13 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Betty C. Walsh
Laurens County Clerk to Council