



MINUTES
APRIL 14, 2015
LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE – PUBLIC SQUARE
COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

ATTENDANCE: **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**- County Council Chairman Joe Wood; County Council Members: Diane Anderson, Stewart Jones, Ted Nash and David Pitts.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT – Vice Chairman Tollison (out of state work) and Councilman Edward McDaniel (deceased).

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

DEPARTMENT HEADS PRESENT: Laurens County Human Resources Manager, Debi Parker; Laurens County Communications Director, Joey Avery; Laurens County Sheriff, Ricky Chastain;; Laurens County Public Works Director Rob Russian, Laurens County Parks, Recreation and Tourism Commission Director, Andy Howard and Captain Tyson, Detention Center Administrator.

PRESS: Vic McDonald, *The Clinton Chronicle*; Iva Cadmus, *WLBG Radio* Jennifer Brown, *GoLaurens.com* and Corey Engle, *The Laurens County Advertiser*.

SCHEDULED MEETING AGENDA ITEMS - **1.)** Call to Order – Chairman Wood; **2.)** Invocation – Councilman Pitts ; **3.)** Pledge of Allegiance; **4.)** Approval of Agenda, April 14, 2015; **5.)** Approval of Minutes – March 24, 2015; **6.)** “Connect Lake Greenwood” (CLG) – Jimmy Peden, Chairman - Connect Lake Greenwood; **7.)** Upper Savannah Workforce Development Area Designation Petition and Consortium Agreement, Sandra Johnson, Workforce Development Administrator, Upper Savannah Council of Governments; **8.)** Resolution #2015-04 – “Declaring April as Fair Housing Month”; **9.)** Resolution #2015-05 – “Designating the Week of April 12-18th as Telecommunicators Week; **10.)** Resolution #2015-06 – “A Resolution Supporting the South Carolina Prescribed Fire Councils Land Management Tools As it Relates Towards The Stewardship of Natural Resources”; **11.)** Resolution #2015-07 – “Supporting State Efforts towards Solutions to Funding Needs for State Maintenance and Operated Road and Bridges.....”; **12.)** Appointment(s) to the Gateway Counseling Center of Laurens County (former Alcohol and Drug Commission); **13.)** Executive Session – Two (2) Employment Matters; One (1) Legal Briefing; One (1) Economic Development Matter; **14.)** Resolution #2015-08 – “A Resolution Authorizing (1) The Execution and Delivery of a Fee In Lieu of Tax and Incentive Agreement by and Between Laurens County, South Carolina (The “County”) And a Company Identified For The Time Being As “Project Needle”, Acting For Itself, One Or More Affiliates Or Other Project Sponsors (The Company”), Pursuant to Which The County Shall Covenant To Accept Certain Negotiated Fees In Lieu Of Ad Valorem Taxes With Respect To The Establishment And / Or Expansion of Certain Facilities In the County (Collectively By The Project) (2) The Benefits of A Multi-County Industrial Or Business Park To Be Made Available To The Company And The Project; (3) Certain Special Source Revenue Credits In Connection With The Project; And (4) Other Matters Relating Thereto”; **15.)** Laurens County Ordinance #784, (By Title Only) “An Ordinance Authorizing (1) The Execution and Delivery of a Fee In Lieu of Tax and Incentive Agreement by and Between Laurens County, South Carolina (The “County”) And a Company Identified For The Time Being As “Project Needle”, Acting For Itself, One Or More Affiliates Or Other Project Sponsors (The Company”), Pursuant to Which The County Shall Covenant To Accept Certain Negotiated Fees In Lieu Of Ad Valorem Taxes (Negotiated FILOT) With Respect To The Expansion OF Certain Facilities In the County (The Expansion Project) (2) The Benefits of A Multi-County Industrial Or Business Park To Be Made Available To The Company And The Expansion Project; (3) Certain Special Source Revenue Credits In Connection With The Project; (4) The Conversion And Re-Documentation of an Existing Lease Purchase Agreement By And Between The County And The Company (As Successor In Interest To a Company Known For the Time Being As Project Needle Predecessor Company) Pertaining To The Company’s Existing Negotiated FILOT Arrangements With Respect



To Certain Existing Facilities Located In The County; And (5) Other Matters Relating Thereto”; 16.) Laurens County Ordinance #787 – “Am Ordinance to Amend Ordinance #465 Providing For The Use of The Maximum Legal Percentage of Local Option Sales Tax Funds For the Fiscal Year 2015-2016; And To Further Use And Apply These Funds For The Purpose of Revenue Shortfalls In Laurens County And Other Matters Appertaining Thereto”; 17.) Laurens County Ordinance #788 – Laurens County FY 2015-2016 Budget (By Title Only); 18.) Administrative Report, Ernie Segars, County Administrator; 19.) Public Comments; 20.) Comments from Council Members; 21.) Adjournment.

MEETING NOTIFICATION - The County Council Members, Department Heads, requesting general public and the Press were informed of the meeting in a timely manner.

CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Wood called the meeting to order and invited all to stand for the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilman Pitts provided the invocation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Chairman Wood called for approval of the agenda with any additions.

Requested Agenda Item: Chairman Wood requested for a Legal Briefing in Executive Session.

COUNCILMAN NASH made the MOTION to approve the agenda as presented and with the additions; COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDDING; VOTE 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – COUNCILMAN JONES made the MOTION to approve the minutes from the March 24, 2015 regular session of Council. COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDDING; VOTE 5-0.

“CONNECT LAKE GREENWOOD” – Mr. Jimmy Peden, Chairman, Connect Lake Greenwood, appeared before Council to inform Council of the mission and working of the organization.

Mr. Peden said, “On behalf of the four (4) local Chambers of Commerce we created this organization and we wish to present our past, present, and future events/projects for the lake. This started as a dream among a small group of people who care about Lake Greenwood. Our group represents the business owners, retirees, young families, water sports enthusiasts, fishermen and boaters. Collectively, we promote and enhance the experience of lake life on Lake Greenwood. We also provide opportunities for volunteers to pool their efforts and make improvements to life on the lake. All funds received support the Connect Lake Greenwood projects and events for lake users to enjoy”.

Continuing, Mr. Peden said, “We have developed a web site - www.ConnectLakeGreenwood.org and have had approximately thirty five thousand (35,000) visitors since its launch last May. Approximately one thousand two hundred fifty (1,250) people registered on the site to receive regular communication. We have also started a lake survey that has evolved into a record number of over six hundred seventy five (675) lake supporters. In one of the events - Lights on the Lake Fireworks, there was an attendance of three thousand (3,000) people on land at Camp Fellowship, and another seven thousand (7,000) who came by boat. We hope to continue to promote the Lake to local, regional and national audiences through this web site, social media and newsletters. We have a budget of twenty four thousand dollars (\$24,000) to continue with events such as May Music/Fireworks, Lights on the Lake, Labor Day/Music/FW, Boat Parade, Safety Lights on Bridges and Boat Repair and Safety Classes”.

The Connect Lake Greenwood Organization requested one thousand dollars (\$1,000) from the County.

Chairman Wood replied that Council will take this as information at this time and will consider during budget deliberations.



UPPER SAVANNAH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT – As Administrator of the Upper Savannah Workforce Development, Ms. Sandra Johnson, approached Council requesting approval of the revised agreement for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Ms. Johnson said, “The Workforce Services within Laurens County consists of an approximate total of three hundred twenty (320) adults, youth, and dislocated workers who received specialized services at the Laurens County South Carolina Works Center. They received occupational training, GED classes, mentoring, and on-the-job training. We assist those that have lost jobs within Laurens County with a dislocated Worker Rapid Response Service. Addressing the youth in Laurens County, we have a youth program where they serve internships with local industry and business. We make this request to Council now due to the new Act that will take effect on July 1, 2015 and must be approved by Councils from the seven (7) County area we represent, the Upper Savannah Council of Governments, by May 4, 2015”.

Councilman Jones asked how the agency was funded? Ms. Johnson replied that federal, state and some special appropriations are the funding sources.

Chairman Wood asked the County Attorney if he had reviewed the proposed document. Attorney Cruickshanks replied that he had not reviewed in detail but recommended Council to approve for signatures.

COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve the document and to be signed by the County Council Chairman. COUNCILMAN NASH SECONDING; VOTE 4-0-1. Councilman Jones abstained and stated that he wished to study it in more detail.

RESOLUTION #2015-04 – “DECLARING APRIL AS FAIR HOUSING MONTH” – Administrator Segars stated that a County Council is required to approve this Resolution in anticipation of applying for any Community Development Block Grants.

COUNCILMAN PITTS made the MOTION to approve the Resolution as presented with COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDING; VOTE 4-1 (Councilman Jones opposed).

RESOLUTION #2015-05 – “DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF APRIL 12-18th AS TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK” – Mr. Joey Avery, Director, Laurens County E-911 / Communications Center appeared before Council and requested Council approval of a Resolution declaring April 12th through April 18th as Telecommunicators Week in Laurens County and in introduced several Dispatchers that were in attendance.

COUNCILMAN NASH made the MOTION to approve Resolution #2015-05 as presented, with COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING; VOTE 5-0.

RESOLUTION #2015-06 – “A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE SOUTH CAROLINA PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL’S (PFC) LAND MANAGEMENT TOOLS AS IT RELATES TOWARDS THE STEWARDSHIP OF NATURAL RESOURCES” – Mr. David Coggins, Commission Member, Laurens County Soil and Water Commission appeared before Council to request Council approval towards a Resolution that supports traditional land management practices and public safety tools that helps prevent and lessen the severity of wildfires while reducing the loss of private property and saving lives while acting as a preventive measure and in the long run of things saving taxpayers the cost and hazards to local governments who respond to wildfires”.

Continuing Mr. Coggins said, “The technique, known as prescribed fire is used to restore and maintain fire-dependent ecosystems, manage wildlife habitat for many species and as a means of controlling detrimental insects and forest diseases. We respectfully request Council support towards the appropriate and continued



use of prescribed fire in Laurens County”.

COUNCILMAN JONES made the MOTION to approve the requested Resolution as presented with COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDING; VOTE 5-0.

RESOLUTION #2015-07 – “A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING STATE EFFORTS TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THE FUNDING NEEDS FOR STATE MAINTAINED AND OPERATED ROADS AND BRIDGES WITHOUT TRANSFERRING THE BURDEN TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND OPPOSING ANY ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THROUGH LACK OF STATE FUNDING WILL LEAD TO INCREASED TAXES ON THE CITIZENS OF LAURENS COUNTY – Chairman Wood stated that those in Columbia just simply do not understand the consequences they would be placing on County Governments.

COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve the requested Resolution with COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING for discussion.

Councilman Jones said, “I am working on and through a listing of unfunded mandates by the State. Unfortunately, if this goes through with the State, it is ultimately left up to the County to be faced with the reoccurring costs”.

Councilman Nash said, “With as much construction that has been going on over the years, the Legislature should be aware of it all with their travels to and from Columbia. At times you can see only two (2) trucks along the roadway with ten or twelve (10-12) men standing around. There is no way the County, especially of our size, could fund all of the equipment and manpower to handle this. The costs for something like this is greater than we can afford”.

Councilman Pitts said, “I firmly believe that this County cannot take this on and survive”.

Chairman Wood said, “This will not be up to the County but would be managed by the County Transportation Committee that is appointed by the Legislature. The State Local Government Fund has been cut nine hundred thousand dollars (\$900,000)...the State is supposed to give this money back to the County. The State is already requiring help funding the Magistrates, Department of Social Services, Solicitor and Registration and Elections....and they do not give us any of the monies back. When the State raises taxes for things like this, the citizens are really paying twice”.

COUNCIL VOTED 5-0 to approve Resolution #2015-07.

APPOINTMENT(S) – GATEWAY COUNSELING CENTER OF LAURENS COUNTY (FORMER ALCOHOL AND DRUG COMMISSION) – Administrator Segars briefed Council on the following two (2) requests from the Chairman of Gateway Counseling Center for appointment: Mr. Jimmy Garrett and Ms. Keri Hanselman.

- 1.) Jimmy Garrett – COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve with COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDING; VOTE 5-0.
- 2.) Keri Hanselman – COUNCILMAN JONES made the MOTION to approve with COUNCILMAN NASH SECONDING; VOTE 5-0.

Councilman Nash asked what districts these two (2) appointment represented. Administrator Segars replied that he felt certain that Mr. Garrett was from District #4 and Ms. Hanselman was from District #3.

FIRST READING - ORDINANCE #787 – “AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE #465 PROVIDING FOR THE USE OF THE MAXIMUM LEGAL PERCENTAGE OF LOCAL OPTION



SALES TAX FUNDS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016; AND TO FURTHER USE AND APPLY THESE FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF REVENUE SHORTFALLS IN LAURENS COUNTY AND OTHER MATTERS APPERTAINING THERETO – COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve Ordinance #787 upon first reading with COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDING for discussion.

Councilman Nash stated that the Local Option Sales Tax is intended to be for the rollback of taxes to help the citizens of Laurens County. I would like to see this Council give the taxpayer a break every now and then”.

Administrator Segars stated that this is the first step with the County budget process to help offset the nine hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$950,000) shortchanged by the State Local Government Fund.

Councilman Jones said, “ I will be voting against this as the citizens are paying all they can out of pocket”.

Councilman Jones proceeded to read from a listing of all County, State and Federal Taxes and fees that the citizens are required to pay.

Chairman Wood stated that at first he voted against this until he actually saw what it did in the long run.

COUNCIL VOTED 4-1 (Councilman Jones was in opposition).

FIRST READING – ORDINANCE #788, “FISCAL YEAR 2015 – 2016 - LAURENS COUNTY BUDGET” - Administrator Segars stated that this will be considered as first reading so as to keep the ordinance readings in line with the overall budget process. The amounts used are the approved numbers from the approved Fiscal Year 2014-2015 County budget process.

General Fund	\$21,747,213
EMS	\$ 3,485,458
Victim’s Assist	\$ 183,661
Solid Waste	\$ 1,964,227
Total	\$27,380,559

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT – Administrator Segars stated that he did not have any reporting.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Chairman Wood opened the floor for public comment at 6:28 P.M. Having no one wishing to address Council, Chairman Wood closed the session at 6:29 P.M.

COUNTY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

- 1.) Councilman Jones said, “As an elected official from the fourth Council District, I was not elected to go with the flow. I am excited about the budget process and intend to see what can be done to help the county”.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to move into Executive Session at 6:30 P.M. to discuss the two (2) employment matters; one (1) legal briefing and one (1) economic development and the one (1) added legal briefing requested by Chairman Wood. COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING; VOTE 5-0.

There was a COUNCIL CONSENSUS to reconvene in open session at 7:40 P.M.

Chairman Wood reported:

- 1.) Employment matter - No action taken



- 2.) Employment matter - No action taken
- 3.) Legal Briefing - No action taken
- 4.) Legal Briefing (added) - No action taken
- 5.) Economic Development:

A.) RESOLUTION #2015-08 – “A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING (1) THE EXECUTION AND DELIVER OF A FEE IN LIEY OF TAX AND INCENTIVE AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA (“THE COUNTY”) AND A COMPANY IDENTIFIED FOR THE TIME BEING AS “PROJECT NEEDLE”, ACTING FOR ITSELF, ONE OR MORE AFFILIATES OR OTHER PROJECT SPONSORS (“THECOMPANY”), PURSUANT TO WHICH THE COUNTY SHALL COVENANT TO ACCEPT CERTAIN NEGOTIATED FEE IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES WITH RESPECT TO THE ESTABLISHMENT AND/OR EXPANSION OF CERTAIN FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY (COLLECTIVELY BY THE PROJECT); (2) THE BENEFITS OF A MULTI-COUNTY INDUSTRIAL OR BUSINESS PARK TO BE MADE AVAILABL TO THE COMPANY AND THE PROJECT; (3) CERTAIN SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDITS IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROJECT; AND (4) OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO” -

COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve the Resolution as presented with COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDDING; VOTE 5-0.

B.) ORDINANCE #784 – (TITLE ONLY) “AN ORDINANC A UTHORIZING (1) THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AND INCENTIVE AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA (THE "COUNTY") AND A COMPANY IDENTIFIED FOR THE TIME BEING AS PROJECT NEEDLE, ACTING FOR ITSELF, ONE OR MORE AFFILIATES OR OTHER PROJECT SPONSORS (THE "COMPANY"), PURSUANT TO WHICH THE COUNTY SHALL COVENANT TO ACCEPT CERTAIN NEGOTIATED FEES IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES ("NEGOTIATED FILOT") WITH RESPECT TO THE EXPANSION OF CERTAIN FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY (THE "EXPANSION PROJECT"); (2) THE BENEFITS OF A MULTI-COUNTY INDUSTRIALOR BUSINESS PARK TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE COMPANY AND THE EXPANSION PROJECT; (3) CERTAIN SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDITS IN CONNECTION WITH THE EXPANSION PROJECT; (4) THE CONVERSION AND RE-DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXISTING LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE COUNTY AND THE COMPANY (AS SUCCESSOR IN INTEREST TO A COMPANY KNOWN FOR THE TIME BEING AS PROJECT NEEDLE PREDECESSOR COMPANY) PERTAINING TO THE COMPANY'S EXISTING NEGOTIATED FILOT ARRANGEMENT WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN EXISTING FACILITIES LOCATED IN THE



COUNTY; AND (5) OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO”.

COUNCILMAN JONES made the MOTION to approve the Resolution as presented with COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDING; VOTE 5-0.

COUNTY COUNCIL COMMENTS (continued):

- 1.) Councilwoman Anderson asked that when the Council goes into executive session for the camera to be shut down in the future.
- 2.) Chairman Wood asked for Council to consider dates for the first budget session.

There was a consensus to hold the first budget session on Thursday, April 23, 2015 at 5:00 P.M. at the Historic Courthouse.

ADJOURNMENT – With no further action required by Council, Chairman Wood adjourned the meeting at 7:25 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Walsh", is written over the printed name.

Betty C. Walsh
Laurens County Clerk to Council