

**MINUTES
COLLETON COUNTY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 2015
12:30 P.M.
COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, OLD JAIL BUILDING**

Colleton County Council met in Special Session on Friday, June 19, 2015 at 12:30 PM, at the County Council Chambers, Old Jail Building. Steven Murdaugh called the meeting to order with Council Members, Gene Whetsell, Dr. Flowers, Evon Robinson, Phillip Taylor in attendance.

Others present included: Kevin Griffin, Ruth Mayer, Donna Lamb, Buddy Hill

Mr. Robinson gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing

Ordinance 15-O-06, To Provide for the Levy of Taxes in Colleton County, South Carolina, for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016; to Provide for All Other Appropriations Thereof; and to Provide for Other Matters Related Thereto.

No comments were made.

Old Business

3rd Reading Ordinance 15-O-06, To Provide for the Levy of Taxes in Colleton County, South Carolina, for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016; to Provide for All Other Appropriations Thereof; and to Provide for Other Matters Related Thereto.

A motion to approve 3rd reading was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Whetsell.

Dr. Flowers said he wanted to make a statement. This is the first time in a number of years that we have had to increase taxes. If the General Assembly in Columbia had not cut the funds they are suppose to give us (Local Government Funds) we would not have to be raising these taxes today. If you look back at how much we've been cut in the last seven years it is around 3.5 million dollars. If we had that money we would not have had to raise these taxes today. They had a four hundred million dollar windfall this year and could have funded this completely but elected to suspend the law and there is a law relative to this. We certainly need to let everybody know that is one of the great reasons why we had to raise taxes now notwithstanding the loss revenue from SC Electric & Gas closing, but even if you take that out we would still have had to raise taxes because we haven't been funded fully over the years. I just wanted to make that statement to let people know exactly where we are.

Mr. Murdaugh said I agree with Dr. Flowers. There is no doubt this is sorta like the perfect storm this year with SCE&G shorting their timetable as far their closure, kinda hit us as a little bit of a surprise and then of course not funding the Local Government Fund, but the good news we fortunately we do have light at the end of the tunnel. It certainly is unfair to local governments particularly when they have a surplus. Maybe it would be a little more understandable when they are having their own fiscal issues, but when they have a surplus it defies logic to me as to why they won't fully fund this thing and help with local governments/counties who are really, it is people, the people who are suffering. I don't understand it, but we are in a situation where we don't have a choice and have to do what we need to do.

The motion carried unanimously.

2nd Reading Ordinance 15-O-08, To Enact Regulations Regarding Smoking in Public Places in order to Protect the Public Against the Harmful Effects of Secondhand Smoke.

A motion to approve 2nd reading was made by Mr. Whetsell and seconded by Dr. Flowers.

The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Resolution 15-R-64, To Authorize the Acceptance and Budgeting of Funds for the Justice Assistance Grant Received for FY 2015-2016 by the Colleton County Sheriff's Office.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Whetsell and seconded by Mr. Robinson.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 15-R-65, To Approve the Victim Assistance Agreement between the Colleton County Sheriff's Office and the Town of Edisto Beach.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Robinson and seconded by Dr. Flowers.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 15-R-66, To Award the Contract for Architectural and Engineering Services for the Town of Cottageville Recreation Area Project to Brownstone Group.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Whetsell and seconded by Mr. Robinson.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 15-R-67, To Award the Contract for CPST-02 for Water and Wastewater Improvements at the Lowcountry Regional Airport Industrial Park.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Dr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Robinson.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 15-R-68, To Authorize Execution of a Fire Protection Service Agreement between Colleton County and the Town of Edisto Beach.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Whetsell and seconded by Mr. Robinson.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 15-R-69, To Authorize the Submittal of a Grant Application Related to the South Carolina Department of Public Safety COPS Grant Application.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Whetsell and seconded by Mr. Robinson.

The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Flowers said he wanted to thank the Administrator and all of his staff for working on the budget.

Mr. Robinson said I know we are not going to be meeting next month, but I'd like to see this council go on record as doing something to express our appreciation for the representation that Senator Pinckney has brought to this county over the years and also the horrific tragedy that has occurred in Charleston County and in this State. I'm 72 years old going on 73 and never recall any such thing as this in our state. The church has always been a place for peace and at our church the door is always open. I hear folks talking about different measures for trying to secure the church and all that, but our position has always been, at a church the doors should always be open for people to come in and we have to go in there by prayer and hope for the best. I would like to see us go on record as us doing something to express our sense of loss also because when one hurts, all hurts. I was so appreciative yesterday, the Governor and some of her staff attended the meeting and it was a great meeting. I would like to see us do something, if not today, maybe later on we can think about doing something to let people know we sympathize also with what has occurred.

Mr. Murdaugh said he agreed one hundred percent. In fact Councilman Taylor called me about the meeting and we talked about the same thing. I don't know what to do, but I do agree we should do something and I am opened to suggestions.

Mr. Robinson said it was food for thought, I just wanted to throw it out and give us something to think about, because I am sure across the state of South Carolina other councils are doing something along with other members of society who saw this as such a terrible thing and while we pray for peace and love and forgiveness for everyone, I think we ought to try to do something.

Mr. Murdaugh said and we don't meet again until August I think.

Mr. Griffin said, no it's July 28th.

Mr. Murdaugh said if we need to, certainly between now and then we can come over here at lunch and get on the record and do something, so over the next couple of weeks let's think about what we could do. Also if someone finds out what all the arrangements will be and keep us posted.

Mr. Robinson said since we are not going to meet, if it is permissible and you want to appoint a committee, a couple of us to work with you or whatever to research and look at what we might do. I'll be glad to work with that committee.

Mr. Murdaugh said he was happy to use the Public Health & Safety Committee.

The meeting was adjourned.

Date: _____

Steven D. Murdaugh, Chairman

ATTEST:

Ruth Mayer, Clerk to Council

******* NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**