

MINUTES

LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL
JANUARY 8, 2008 – 5:30 P.M.

LAURENS COUNTY COURTHOUSE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – PUBLIC SQUARE

ATTENDANCE:

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

COUNTY STAFF – Laurens County Administrator, Ernest Segars; Laurens County Public Works Director Scott Holland, Laurens County Attorney Sandy Cruickshanks and Betty C. Walsh, Laurens County Clerk to Council.

PRESS – Emil Finley, WLBG-Radio; Bristow Marchant, *The Clinton Chronicle*; John Duvall, GoLaurens.Com Website.

SCHEDULED MEETING AGENDA ITEMS - ① Approval of January 8, 2008 Agenda; ② Approval of Minutes from December 11, 2007 regular session; ③ Approval – Salary and Compensation Study Consulting Firm; ④ Road Acceptance into County Maintenance System; ⑤ Capital Projects List Submission to Legislative Delegation; ⑥ Executive Session – Personnel Matter, Economic Development Matter and a Requested County Land Purchase.

MEETING NOTIFICATION - The County Council Members and the Press were informed of the meeting in a timely manner.

CALL TO ORDER – Councilman Coleman called the January 8, 2008 session of Laurens County Council to order at 5:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers in the Historic Courthouse in Laurens, South Carolina.

Chairman Coleman invited all to stand for the delivering of the invocation by Vice Chair Anderson and all participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

APPROVAL – AGENDA – JANUARY 8, 2008– Upon a MOTION from COUNCILMAN NASH and a SECOND from VICE CHAIR ANDERSON, Council VOTED 7-0 to approve the Agenda with the following additions: Administrator Segars requested the addition of county facility use.

APPROVAL – MINUTES – DECEMBER 11, 2007 – COUNCILMAN WOOD made the MOTION to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2007 regular session of Council with COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDDING; VOTE 7-0.

APPROVAL – SALARY AND COMPENSATION CONSULTING FIRM – Administrator Segars began by saying that four (4) proposals had been received and were reviewed. Administrator called upon Rossie Davis to recap the procedures towards the received quotes.

Rossie Davis, Human Resources Manager informed Council that the County received proposals from four (4) qualified firms to conduct the study. Mr. Davis said, "Based on a combination of cost, demonstrated experience, reputation and familiarity with the competitive labor market of our area we highly recommend the study to be implemented by The Archer Company. They have demonstrated long-term stability as well as future support and maintenance of the classification plan. A payment of \$5,841 would be required to implement the study with the remainder to be paid upon approval of the final report."

Administrator Segars stated that this was not the lowest bid and noted that the criteria did differ greatly among the firms.

Vice Chair Anderson questioned if the other entities were pleased with their work. Mr. Davis replied that their satisfaction was well received from the initial study as well as the continuing working relationship.

Chairman Coleman asked what the on-going costs would be? Mr. Davis replied that it would be \$750 per year towards maintenance and the re-evaluation of jobs.

Those firms that were considered are as follows:

CONSULTING FIRM	LOCATION	STAFF	COST
The Archer Company, LLC	Rock Hill, SC	Multi-person staff - [references & qualifications provided] <u>RECENT CLIENTS:</u> Aiken, Newberry, Lexington and Edgefield Counties; City of Laurens, Commission of Public Works [all compensation/pay classification studies]	\$ 17,700.00
Palmetto Management Partners, LLC	Chester, SC	2 "inside consultants"; 2 "on a contract basis as needed (qualifications listed as "over twenty years")" <u>RECENT CLIENTS:</u> Children's Attention Home, Rock Hill [design compensation plan, employee handbook and sexual harassment training; (no compensation or pay classification studies listed for counties or cities)]	\$20,000.00
Human Resource Professionals	Ladys Island, SC	One person staff [references & qualifications provided] <u>RECENT CLIENTS:</u> Colleton & Jasper Counties; Town of Cheraw, Town of Santee [no listing of work provided]	\$ 14,900.00
Condry and Associates, Inc.	Athens, GA	Multi-person staff [references & qualifications provided] <u>RECENT CLIENTS:</u> Jasper County, Rutherford County, NC Lincoln County, NC [all classification /compensation studies]	\$ 45,000.00

COUNCILMAN TRIBBLE made the MOTION to approve the awarding of the study to The Archer Group; COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDDING for discussion.

Councilman Nash stated that he was not expecting an evaluation of like salaries from other counties but would be a study based on the work performed. Administrator Segars said that some departments need updated job descriptions; Mr. David said that it would be an evaluation of the position not the people.

Councilman Wood said, "I've said this before and I'll say it again, I feel like we are just throwing our money away. I cannot see spending good money on something that will not go anywhere. The Sheriff's Department has already had this survey done. The reason is useless. We have not determined where the monies will come from. All we have to do is go to the South Carolina Association of Counties...they already have this information."

Councilman Tribble said, "We certainly do not have the seventeen thousand dollars (\$17,000) budgeted to do this. The problems are so severe that we can't do our jobs that we are chartered to do. Having documentation from the surrounding areas does provide us with a benchmark. With all this, I will vote in favor of the motion. "

COUNCIL VOTED 4-3 [Council Members McDaniel, Nash and Wood were in opposition].

ROAD ACCEPTANCE INTO COUNTY SYSTEM MAINTENANCE – Public Works Director Scott Holland appeared before Council to request acceptance of a road – Gray Barn Road - into the county system for maintenance.

Mr. Holland explained that his office had received a written request from Ken Couser, Developer of the property, to have the road considered for acceptance into the county maintenance system.

Continuing, Mr. Holland said, "The road is located off of AB Jacks Road and Woodberry Road between Laurens and Clinton and is a circular loop that begins and ends on Woodberry Road [.736 miles]. The construction was completed in September of 2004 and was inspected throughout the various phases of construction. There are currently seven (7) residences fronting the roadway. The three-year waiting period and the residency requirements have all been met. A final inspection was held on December 7, 2007 and all was in compliance."

COUNCILMAN NASH made the MOTION to approve the acceptance of the road; VICE CHAIR ANDERSON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

LAURENS COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION – CAPITAL PROJECTS LIST FUNDING – In briefing Council, Administrator Segars said, "The staff is preparing a list of capital projects that Laurens County can submit to the County Legislative Delegation for possible funding in the FY 2009 State Budget. We are aware of the fact that other localities in the state submitted a variety of capital projects for funding in the FY 2008 State Budget and some of the projects were included. Laurens County has never submitted a request of this nature. Some of the projects noted to date include roofing projects at the Historic Court House and the Emergency Services Building on South Harper Street and the improvement of sidewalks around the Historic Court House. We plan to construct a letter for the County Delegation to consider. The Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission will also be making application for these funds as a separate entity. There are no guarantees that any of these project will be funded, but there are advantages to submitting the projects to the Delegation for consideration.

Councilman Wood stated that if we were approved for some of the funds, it would free us up from capital expenses for other matters. Mr. Holland replied that it would because all of the noted projects were capital funded items.

Councilman Nash stated that microfilming of the county records should be considered when applying for the funds.

Councilman Tollison questioned what were the downfalls of this? Administrator Segars replied that there were none; that this was just a request for assistance with our projects.

COUNCILMAN TRIBBLE made the MOTION to approve for the submission of the grant application; COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

MEETING REMINDERS – Administrator Segars reminded Council of the following upcoming meetings: Chamber of Commerce Banquet, Dr. Walters Retirement Reception, Fire Chiefs Meeting and the NAACP Annual Banquet.

CLARIFICATION OF FACILITY USE – Administrator Segars requested clarification from Council if there should be a candidate or party affiliation requesting use of county facilities during the upcoming political campaigns.

Upon a MOTION from COUNCILMAN TRIBBLE and a SECOND from COUNCILMAN TOLLISON, Council VOTE 7-0 for the staff to accommodate any requests made by a political party.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Chairman Coleman opened to floor for public comments at 5:50 P.M. Having no one wishing to address Council, Chairman Coleman closed the session at 5:51 P.M.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – VICE CHAIR ANDERSON made the MOTION for Council to move into Executive Session at 5:52 P.M. to discuss a personnel matter, and Economic Development matter and a matter considering the purchase of county property. COUNCILMAN NASH SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

There was a COUNCIL CONSENSUS to reconvene in open session at 6:59 P.M.

- 1.) Personnel Matter – COUNCILMAN TRIBBLE made the MOTION for the staff to proceed with the job offer for the Director of Emergency Medical Services, COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.
- 2.) Economic Development Matter – Chairman Coleman reported that no action was taken.
- 3.) County property purchase – COUNCILMAN TRIBBLE made the MOTION for Council to authorize the staff to proceed with negotiations towards the property purchase and to ask for clarification of the location of the property. VICE CHAIR ANDERSON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

COUNTY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

- 1.) Councilman Tollison asked for an update on the lease/purchase agreement for the patrol cars. Administrator Segars replied that all documents were in place and that the patrol cars were on order and would arrive in February.
- 2.) Councilman McDaniel said, "This did not dawn on me until after we had all departed but, at the last meeting of Council, this Council voted to support the expansion of the Shaw Plant. The bigotry displayed during my tenure there still exists. When employed there, I was told that I could not mix socially with anyone there....now they are asking me to vote on helping them. Less than five percent hold a public job within the County. Something is wrong. I ask you to even look at the local boards and commissions....they are lacking in a minority representation. You can call it what it is in Laurens County. What do we have to do to be accepted? We can not even be elected at large. We need to start addressing some of our problems....things are changing and we need to support our colored folks. I ask you to help us out....blacks and whites were trapped in the mills....some were able to rise above....it is now a necessity to move on and up."

ADJOURNMENT – With no further Council business to conduct, there was a COUNCIL CONSENSUS to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Betty C. Walsh
Laurens County Clerk to Council