

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

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**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; Lisa Kirk, Director, Laurens County Finance; Debi Parker, Manager of Human Resources and Ricky Chastain, Laurens County Sheriff.

**PRESS:** The *Laurens County Advertiser*, Corey Engle; Vic McDannald, Clinton Chronicle; Iva Cadmus, WLBG-Radio and GoLaurens Representative.

**GUEST SPEAKERS:** Laurens County Humane Society Representatives, Ms. Jill Mechling, Interim Director and volunteers Elaine Hunter and Majorie Thompson. Laurens County Disabilities and Special Needs, Mr Jason Tavenner, Director.

**SCHEDULED SESSION AGENDA ITEMS** – (1) Approval of Agenda, March 11, 2014; (2) Approval of Minutes from the February 25, 2014 Regular Session; (3.) 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”; 3-a.) Third 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”; (4) Public Hearing - Laurens County Ordinance #763 – An Ordinance which will amend an existing Multi County Park Agreement with an existing Fountain Inn Industry; (4-a.) Third Reading - Laurens County Ordinance #763 An Ordinance which will amend an existing Multi County Park Agreement with an existing Fountain Inn Industry; (5) Laurens County Humane Society - Jill Mechling, Interim Director; (6) Laurens County Resolution #2014-04 – “Declaring March 2014 as Disabilities Awareness Month”; (7) Laurens County Resolution #2014-05 – “April - Fair Housing Month”; (8) Retention and reassignment of Deputies of the Laurens County Sheriff’s Department; (9.) Third 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”; (9) Administrative Report – Ernie Segars, County Administrator; (10) 6:00 P.M. (time approximate); (11) Public Comment, Fifteen Minute Period (not to exceed five minutes per topic); (12) Comments from Council Members; (12) 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 March 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 invited all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the invocation provided by Councilman Wood.

**APPROVAL – AGENDA – MARCH 11, 2014** – Upon a MOTION from VICE CHAIRMAN MCDANIEL and a SECOND from COUNCILMAN NASH; the agenda was approved with no deletions or additions; VOTE 7-0.

**APPROVAL – MINUTES – FEBRUARY 25, 2014 – REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL** – Upon a MOTION from VICE CHAIRMAN MCDANIEL and a SECOND from COUNCILMAN TOLLISON, the minutes from the February 25, 2014 meeting was approved as presented; VOTE 7-0.



**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”.** Chairman Coleman opened the public hearing at 5:36 PM for public comments. Having no one wishing to address neither Council nor the proposed ordinance, Chairman Coleman closed the hearing at 5:37 PM.

- a.) **THIRD 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”.** – VICE CHAIRMAN MCDANIEL made the MOTION to approve Ordinance #762 upon third reading as presented; with COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDDING.

Vice Chairman McDaniel asked if the fee stream would be changing. County Attorney Cruickshanks replied that the percentages would not change but there would be new dates for the inventory expansion part of it.

COUNCIL VOTED 7-0.

**PUBLIC HEARING – ORDINANCE #763 – “AN ORDINANCE WHICH WILL AMEND AN EXISTING MULTI COUNTY PARK AGREEMENT WITH AN EXISTING FOUNTAIN INN INDUSTRY”** – Chairman Coleman opened the public hearing at 5:39 PM for public comments. Having no one wishing to address neither Council nor the proposed ordinance, Chairman Coleman closed the hearing at 5:40 PM.

- a.) **THIRD READING – ORDINANCE #763 – “AN ORDINANCE WHICH WILL AMEND AN EXISTING MULTI COUNTY PARK AGREEMENT WITH AN EXISTING FOUNTAIN INN INDUSTRY”** - COUNCILMAN TOLLISON made the MOTION to approve Ordinance #763 upon third reading as presented; with COUNCILMAN NASH SECONDDING; COUNCIL VOTED 7-0.

**LAURENS COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY** – Ms. Jill Mechling, Interim Director for the Laurens County Humane Society, appeared before Council to provide an update on their program and goals for Laurens County.

Ms. Mechling said, “We are a small Board of eight (8) females who have the love for animals. We have raised funds in various ways and wish to encourage Council to help make the shelter happen for Laurens County. We presently have five (5) acres on Charlottes Road that has been deeded to our organization. We need funds for operations on an ongoing basis. We have estimated that it would cost at least ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) a month for one (1) full time employee, utilities and day to day operations. We do plan to house cats and dogs. We offer assistance with the spay and neuter clinic by offering a low cost program. One hundred twenty seven (127) vouchers were used during this past year for a total of four thousand ninety nine dollars (\$4,099). Any help from the County would certainly be appreciated”.

Councilman Tollison asked if their program was one hundred percent non-euthanizing. Ms. Mechling replied “We hope to be and that we are still in the planning stages. If we do become a no-kill agency free food would be donated from Pedigree”.

Councilman Tollison asked if their shelter would be replacing the shelter now in place with the County. Ms. Mechling replied that they would take the over flow of dogs from the County shelter.



Councilman Tollison stated, "The points made here are all well and good and will be a needed program within Laurens County. Laurens County is hit by many groups requesting funds each year. With this said, I will not be voting in favor of funding another shelter over what is now in place with the County".

Administrator Segars asked if this was a capital request for construction funding. Ms. Mechling replied that their organization has two hundred fifteen thousand dollars (\$215,000) to apply towards the project.

Councilman Wood asked how much would it take to run the shelter for a year? Ms. Mechling replied that based on the shelter in McCormick County, approximately one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) for a five thousand four hundred (5,400) square foot building.

Chairman Coleman thanked Ms. Mechling for addressing Council and noted that funding requests are discussed with decisions made during budget deliberations.

**LAURENS COUNTY RESOLUTION #2014-04 – "DECLARING MARCH 2014 AS DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH"** - Mr. Jason Tavenner, Director of the Laurens County Disabilities and Special Needs appeared before Council requesting approval of a Resolution declaring March 2014 as Disabilities Awareness Month.

Mr. Tavenner said, "We provide this service to well over five hundred (500) clients in Laurens County. The Laurens County Disabilities and Special Needs Board is a public, non-profit agency that serves people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, head injuries or spinal cord injuries. Our goal is to offer opportunities for people with disabilities to reach their full potential. Our day program located at Evergreen Skills, we are overcrowded with one hundred eighty (180) men and women that go there every day and work on site or go to another site. We feel like we do not have a strong presence in the Clinton area and have purchased a building in Clinton using grant monies. We hope to open this facility in the Fall of 2014".

COUNCILMAN PITTS made the MOTION to approve Resolution #2014-04 as presented, with COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDDING; VOTE 7-0.

**LAURENS COUNTY RESOLUTION #2014-05 – "APRIL – FAIR HOUSING MONTH"**. – Chairman Coleman noted that Council is required to approve a Resolution in anticipation of applying for Community Development Block Grants.

COUNCILMAN PITTS made the MOTION to approve Resolution #2014-05 as presented, with COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDDING; VOTE 7-0.

**RETENTION AND REASSIGNMENT OF DEPUTIES OF THE LAURENS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT** – Administrator Segars briefed Council on the current status of the contracted services for security services by Laurens County Sheriff's Department and the Laurens County Memorial Hospital (formerly Laurens County Health Care System).

The Laurens County Memorial Hospital (Greenville Health System) has notified Sheriff Chastain that the System will terminate its agreement with the County Sheriff's Office for security services effective March 31, 2014. Sheriff Chastain has requested, in writing, that his Department be allowed to retain the two (2) officers for assignment within the Sheriff's Patrol Positions. The total cost to be absorbed by the County would be approximately sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) in salary.

Sheriff Chastain stated that his intent is to reposition the two (2) Deputies within the Patrol Division from 2:00 AM to 2:00 PM. These hours would lend support to both the day and night shifts by overlapping during the regular 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM shifts.



Councilman Pitts stated that he had spoken to the Sheriff about this request and it was determined that this would be a reoccurring expense and that he could not support a sixty thousand dollar (\$60,000) reoccurring expense in the Sheriff's Department payroll.

Vice Chairman McDaniel questioned if there were any stipulations made during the contract discussions as to how placement would be handled should the contract end? Councilman Tollison stated that he felt there were stipulations such as this to come back to the Council with the request.

Councilman Pitts asked if there were any open positions presently within his department because he did not want to lay any officers off. Sheriff Chastain replied that there were no open positions presently within Class 1.

Administrator Segars stated that these salaries would only have to be absorbed from April to June of this Fiscal Year and could be addressed in more detail during the upcoming budget discussions.

Councilwoman Anderson asked if there were funds in the budget to accommodate?

Councilman Tollison said, "Within the financial report just handed out, that the Sheriff's Department is already in the red for this fiscal year by seven percent (7%). These are trained officers and I have no problem in taking these expenses on.

Councilman Wood stated that the County is always short with Detention Officers and asked if these could not be placed with the Detention Center. Sheriff Chastain stated that the officers were trained as class 1 officers and that they would have to be sent back to the Academy for a different training classification.

COUNCILMAN TOLLISON made the MOTION to approve the reassignment of two (2) Deputies with the Sheriff's Department until the end of the fiscal year with COUNCILMAN WOOD SECONDING.

Councilman Pitts said, "For some reason the salary positions in the Sheriff's Department was cut one hundred forty two thousand dollars (\$142,000) last year. I remember asking him if the Department could be run with this drastic of a cut; his reply was I'll try".

Chairman Coleman stated that these two (2) positions are reinstated for the remaining three (3) months in this Fiscal Year and that there was no guarantee that these two (2) positions will be continued in the next fiscal year.

COUNCIL VOTED 7-0 to approve the reassignment of two (2) Deputies with the Sheriff's Department.

**THIRD READING – LAURENS COUNTY 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” –**

In review, County Attorney Cruickshanks said, "Fisher Barton has requested to modify their existing Fee In Lieu Of Tax Arrangement 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".

COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve Ordinance #761 upon third reading as presented, with COUNCILMAN NASH SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT – ERNIE SEGARS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR** - Administrator Segars stated, “The budget packages were in the hand of the County Departments with a deadline of March 21<sup>st</sup> to have them returned. One thing Council will have to seriously look at during the upcoming budget deliberations is the County Emergency Services. The ISO 10 areas need to be discussed with a possible bond issuance. Another EMS station is needed also”.

Administrator Segars also noted that he had been reminded by Mrs. Kirk that this is National Purchasing Month and commended the County Staff that implements this program.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** – Chairman Coleman opened the floor for public comments at 6:15 P.M. Having no one present wishing to address Council, Chairman Coleman closed the session at 6:16 P.M.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Councilman Pitts asked if all of the new vehicles were in at this point? Administrator Segars replied that they were.

Councilman Pitts stated, “I appreciate the attendance of the various County Department Heads at the County Council meetings. I would like to request that the Department Heads provide this Council with reports of their Department in open session at least annually”.

Vice Chairman McDaniel openly thanked all of the volunteer organizations within Laurens County for their time and efforts.

Councilman Tollison asked Captain Tyson if the Detention Center was currently fully staffed at this time. Captain Tyson replied that they currently have fifty six (56) employed with eight (8) at pre-service.

**ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business, Chairman Coleman adjourned the meeting of Council at 6:20 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Betty C. Walsh  
Laurens County Clerk to Council