



Clarendon County Regular Council Meeting
Monday, April 12, 2021
6:00 PM

Weldon Auditorium, 7 Maple Street, Manning, SC

Those in attendance:

Chairman Dwight L. Stewart, Jr.
Councilman Billy G. Richardson
Councilman Benton Blakely
Clerk to Council, Dorothy M. Levy

Vice Chairman W.J. Frierson
Councilman A.C. English
Administrator David W. Epperson

Press in attendance: The Item, Kareem Wilson

Others in attendance included:

Lynden Anthony	Ted Felder	Meesha Witherspoon	Sharron Haley
Edgar Donald, Jr.	Carly Spivey	Mary Billups	Linda Lemon
Jennifer Powell	Maggie Robertson	Russell A. Miller	Shiquita Black
Stephen Rodvansky	Jacqueline Blackwell	Robert Pegram	Bea Simon
Tammy Rodvansky	Charlotte Johnson	Gregory Holliday	George Kosinski
Jane Powell	Buddy Jennings	Willie Briggs	Michal A. Johnson
Sharon Ridgeway	And Other Clarendon County Residents		

Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Vice Chairman Frierson led the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

1. Approval of the Agenda

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Agenda for April 12, 2021.

2. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Councilman English, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the council meeting minutes for the Regular Council Meeting, which was held on Monday, March 8, 2021.

3. Presentation – SCCWCT- Lag Time Award

Mr. Van Henson, Risk Manager, South Carolina Association of Counties presented the Lag Time Award First-Runner Up to Tammy Rodvansky. He stated that the Lag Time Award is an award given to companies that files worker's compensation and Liability claims on time. Mr. Henson continued by stating that Clarendon County came in second place with a time of .33 and the winner had a time of .31.

Chairman Stewart thanked Mr. Henson and Ms. Rodvansky for making Clarendon County look good.

4. Presentation – Clarendon County Council on Aging.

Ms. Jennifer Powell, Executive Director of Clarendon County Council on Aging, gave County Council an update of the services offered at Council of Aging. She stated that Council of Aging has two centers, one in Summerton and one in Manning and both centers are required to be open 5 days a week. Ms. Powell continued by

stating that the Summerton Center has 22 to 28 active participants and the Manning Center has 20 to 35 active participants daily.

Ms. Powell stated that this gives the participants the opportunity to mingle with other participants and also take field trips. She further stated that Council on Aging serves meals to homes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays and since July 1, 2020, the centers served 65,000 meals. Ms. Powell concluded her presentation by stating that there is a waiting list for meals on wheels.

- Councilman Blakely asked about opening up a center in the Turbeville area. He stated that the EMS Building is not in use and would be a good place to open a center in Turbeville.
- Ms. Powell replied by stating that the EMS Building was discussed, and it is owned by the Presbyterian Church in Sardinia.

Chairman Stewart thanked Ms. Powell for the update on Clarendon County Council on Aging.

5. Ordinance 2021-02

On motion by Vice Chairman Frierson and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Third and Final Reading of Ordinance 2021-02 – an Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of an Infrastructure Credit Agreement By and Between Clarendon County, South Carolina, and [Project Mobile I]; Providing for a Special Source Revenue Credit; and Other Related Matters.

6. Public Hearing – Ordinance 2021-03

Chairman Stewart stated that the Public Hearing was open for Ordinance 2021-03 - An Ordinance to Adopt, Charge, and Collect a Service or User Fee for Disposal of Residential Solid Waste for Clarendon County, South Carolina and Other Matters Related Thereto. He stated that trash is a big problem in Clarendon County, and it comes with a high cost of disposing of all the waste. Mr. Epperson continued by stating that because of the high cost of disposing of the solid waste, the County needs assistance from our residents because the fee to dispose of the solid waste increased 2.6% over the last 5 years.

The Public Hearing opened at 6:29 pm.

Administrator Epperson stated that his Ordinance is to collect a user fee of \$50 per residential unit to dispose of waste. He stated that it is very expensive to dispose of waste and the price has increased 2.6%. He concluded by stating that this would go into effect on July 1, 2021.

- Willie Briggs: How would the fees be used.
- Administrator Epperson: It would be used to off-set the fees for disposing of waste.
- Willie Briggs: What if the fees are not paid, would it go against your property.
- Administrator Epperson : Yes, your taxes would be delinquent if not paid.
- Willie Briggs : Would there be a lien on your property.
- Administrator Epperson: Only Residential Units.
- Willie Briggs: Please do not put older people out of their home and sell them for \$50. Some people will not understand about the waste disposal fees.
- Councilman Blakely: We do not want to put a burden on our citizens, maybe we can do a penny sales tax.
- Vice Chairman Frierson: There needs to be an education program that goes with it and we have to educate our citizens. Educating our citizens is the key to letting them know what they need to do and what we need to do.
- Chairman Stewart: Solid waste is a major problem and I encourage Council to pass this Ordinance. If it becomes a burden, we will make some changes.

Chairman Stewart asked if there were any other comments. Hearing none, he stated that the Public Hearing will close. The Public Hearing closed at 6:56 pm

7. Ordinance 2021-03

On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous approval to the Second Reading of Ordinance 2021-03 –An Ordinance to Adopt, Charge, and Collect a Service or User Fee for Disposal of Residential Solid Waste for Clarendon County, South Carolina and Other Matters Related Thereto.

8. Presentation of Proposed FY2021-2022 Budget

Lynden Anthony, CFO, began his presentation by thanking the staff of the Finance department, departmental managers, and elected officials.

Budgeting is an ongoing and dynamic process that is typically broken down into five phases:

- County Council, other elected officials and administration estimate available resources, perform an assessment of needs, and then set priorities. Essentially, we determine how much in revenue we will have access to and ask stakeholders what their funding needs are.
- These priorities are then reflected in a budget through an allocation of resources.
- Council, through these deliberations and in communication with our citizens, approve a budget.
- Elected officials and administration then implement these priorities through service delivery and project development; lastly,
- We monitor our on-going results for any changes or modifications, if needed.

General Fund:

The General Assembly has capped the amount of increase allowed in millage rates at the local level. The budget that we are submitting for First Reading contains the State allowed millage increase of 1.23% for County operations. [160.0 mils]

Last year, we did not utilize all of the available millage for the General Fund when we implemented the Emergency Services Special Tax District and integrated EMS into the Fire department. The General Fund budget includes these 3.0 mils. [163.0 mils]

We are continuing to see our collections of Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) revenue increase over what we have received in prior years. As a result, we are again this year recommending an increase of \$200,000 to the Local Option Sales Tax credit given to taxpayers; the credit would then become \$3.0 million.

As a result of these three items, and expected reductions in the collection of delinquent taxes, we anticipate an increase in General Fund ad valorem revenue of about \$659,000.

The current pandemic continues to directly impact our collection of local accommodation taxes, particularly during the summer and early fall months. We are budgeting a reduction of 10% in local accommodations taxes again this year. The State's General Assembly has fully funded the Local Government Fund in the upcoming year, resulting in an additional \$21,000– about the same amount as the drop in accommodations funding.

This budget includes the County Solid Waste Fee just discussed and acted upon.

In summary, we expect that the General Fund revenues will total \$23,236,015.

General Fund expenditures: The budget package contains the requests of our locally elected officials and have not been modified.

This budget package does include a 1% COLA for staff.

Most of the budgeted increases at the department level are a result of current staffing levels, an increase in health insurance premiums of 2.5% and a 1% increase in employer paid retirement expense as mandated by the General Assembly.

We are requesting additional funds for building maintenance and needed improvements to our Correction facility. Also, included are capital asset requests for additional law enforcement vehicles, the Coroner's office and heavy equipment in both Public Services and the Recreation department.

Fire Rescue:

There are two major components to anticipated revenue for Fire Rescue services within the County:

- We are budgeting the same 1.23% mil increase for Fire Rescue operations and the new Emergency Services tax district,
- Billable collections of \$1.2 million (net) for EMS services.

Included in the Fire Rescue budget is \$573,000 in capital asset requests; that include rescue systems upgrades, vehicle replacements, additional bunker gear and the relocation of the sub-station in Davis Station.

With total Fire Rescue revenue of \$6,856,290 and expenditures of \$6,957,930; we are out of balance by \$102,000.

Water and Sewer System:

Continued system expansion is being funded through a remaining USDA grant. After non-cash depreciation expenses of about \$423,500, we are anticipating a net utility loss of close to \$25,000. The budget submission from the Water System indicates that there is sufficient cash flow from operations to make debt service requirements on its USDA bonds in the upcoming year.

Weldon Auditorium:

We anticipate an increase in facility utilization as our local economy opens back up. While we are not requesting a transfer from the General Fund to support operations this year, we are requesting the same \$60,000 transfer from Hospitality fee fund.

Other:

We would also like to include in the First Reading our request that a \$2.0 million TAN be approved in the event it becomes necessary in the fall for cash flow purposes. While we do not anticipate that it will be needed, we would like to have the public's comments and your authorization to act quickly if needed.

Included again this year is our request to borrow an amount not to exceed \$350,000 in the form of a five-year Capital lease for the purchase of additional heavy equipment for use within our Public Works area as we continue to invest in equipment upgrades.

I know that this was an extremely brief summary of a complicated budget. It seems to get more and more challenging each year. Again, we are looking at a preliminary General Fund budget that is out of balance by \$102,000, bringing it into balance will be somewhat problematic given that we went into this budget "season" still impacted by the Covid pandemic.

Mr. Anthony Concluded his presentation by stating that as of first reading, we have a preliminary General Fund budget that reflects a deficit of nearly \$102,000.

1. **Ms. Jacqueline Blackwell**, Clarendon County Coroner, began her presentation by stating that the Coroner's office is requesting a full-time receptionist so that the Coroner's office will be open to serve the public when the Coroner or Deputy Coroner is out in the field. She is also requesting an increase in

uniforms, travel, and training. Ms. Blackwell concluded her presentation by asking for an increase in the Deputy Coroner's salary as well as the Coroner's salary to be in line with the average Coroner's salary.

2. **Mr. Gregory Holliday**, Chairman of Clarendon County Voters Registration and Election Board, began his presentation by recognizing the Voter's Registration Board as well as the Staff of the Voter's Registration Office. Mr. Holliday requested an increase in Office Supplies, Board Stipend, Contractual Services, Maintenance Contract, Travel and Training. He stated that because of all of the elections, the requested increases are necessary to meet the demands of the Voter's Registration Office.
3. **Mr. Edgar R. Donald, Jr.**, Third Circuit Public Defender, began his presentation by requesting a one-time allocation of \$8,530 to update their 10+ year old computer equipment and software to meet the demands of the Coronavirus crisis and being able to effectively communicate with electronics and video communication. Mr. Donald concluded his presentation by requesting the renewal of the recurring appropriation from Clarendon County in the amount of \$125,500.

9. Financial Report

Mr. Lynden Anthony, CFO, began his report by stating the following:

- **The General Fund** had Expenditures of \$1,817,815 and Revenue figures were not available as of March 31, 2021.
- **Weldon Auditorium** had income of \$6,905 for the month ending March 31, 2021 and total Expenses were \$93,745. He stated that the Weldon Auditorium ended the month of March 2021 after transfers with a Net Deficit of \$26,840.
- **Water and Sewer Department** – had income of \$837,626 for the month ending March 31, 2021 and total Expenses were \$390,367. He stated that after Depreciation, Bond Interest Expense, Transfers, Interest Income, and USDA Phase II, Water and Sewer ended the month of March 2021 with a net utility income of \$182,179.
- **The C-Fund Program** for the month of March 2021 had a Cash Balance of \$2,267,673 of which \$1,076,201 has been committed to remaining local paving projects, State Construction Projects in Progress and State Proviso Funds. He stated that the C-Fund Program had an Uncommitted Balance of \$1,191,472 as of the end of March 2021.

10. Administrator's Report

Administrator Epperson began his report by giving Council the following updates:

- **USDA Water Projects** – The County is looking at diverting all wastewater from its lagoon to the City of Manning's Waste/Water Treatment Plant. This would require the installation of force main and pump stations along the selected route. Two routes are being proposed by our engineer. An important factor in which route will be selected will be which route will allow us to expand our customer base and provide sewer to areas that currently do not have this availability. We have applied for grant funding to assist with the cost of this project.
- **COVID-19** - As of April 12, 2021

Active Cases (last 14 days)	56
Total Deaths:	106

➤ **Public Outreach Efforts**

- We continue to push out information regarding the pandemic and ways the public can protect itself and their families. Social distancing, wearing a mask, and washing hands.

- We are also encouraging citizens to get vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine whenever they are eligible to do so. It is our hope that the vaccine will be accessible to our citizens through different providers as we move through this process.
- Vaccinations are continuing to occur in the County. As of April 23, 2021, all County employees who have elected to be vaccinated will have had the opportunity to receive their 2nd shot and will be fully vaccinated by April 30.
- **County Operations**
 - All employees returned to their normal working schedules.
 - Strict protocols continue to be put in place for employees who test positive for COVID and employees who are quarantined.
 - PPE continues to be provided to staff as requested.
 - All county facilities remain open to the public during normal operating hours.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Baseball and softball games began today and these will continue weekly through the end of May.

11. Chairman's Report

Chairman Stewart stated that he attended the Grand Opening of K & H Resource Center in Summerton and he thanked Ms. Kathleen Gibson for her dedication. He stated that Council received a thank you card from the family of Wade McLeod and he asked everyone to keep the McLeod family in your prayers.

12. Executive Session

Chairman Stewart asked for a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss an Economic Development Contractual Mater.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to go into Executive Session to discuss an Economic Development Contractual Matter.

The Executive Session began at 7:42 pm

13. Open Session

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to come out of Executive Session and back into Open Session.

The Executive Session ended at 9:13 pm.

Chairman Stewart stated that in Executive Session, Council discussed a Contractual Matter inference to Economic Development, and it was for information only and no action would be taken.

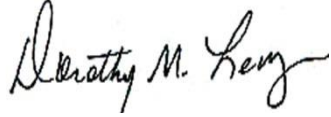
14. Adjourn

Chairman Stewart stated that we have exhausted our agenda and he asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular Council Meeting.

On motion by Vice Chairman Frierson and Seconded by Councilman Blakely, Council voted Unanimous Approval to adjourn the Regular Council Meeting.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dorothy M. Levy
Clerk to Clarendon County Council, CCC

