



Clarendon County Regular Council Meeting
Monday, January 10, 2022
6:00 PM

Council Chambers, 411 Sunset Drive, 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

Absent:

Press in attendance: The Item, Kareem Wilson

Others in attendance included:

Lynden Anthony	Ted Felder	Patricia Pringle	Jacqueline Blackwell	Robert Pegram
Robert McFadden, Sr.	John Bonaparte	George Frierson	Willie Briggs	K. Grice
Steve Smith	Katie R. McFadden	Carrie D. Myers	Larry Johnson, Sr.	Timothy Miller
Terry Streath	Michael Streath	Robert E. Bowman	Mary Cooper	Gary Beard

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 January 10, 2022.

2. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Councilman English and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the council meeting minutes for the Regular Council Meeting, which was held on Monday, December 13, 2021.

3. Service Awards Recognition

Prior to the business session of the Regular Council Meeting, Linda Lemon, HR Director, read out the names of the nine employees that would be receiving service awards this month.

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| • Timothy Baxley | 5 Years | Dalton McKenzie | 5 Years |
| • Barbara Proctor | 5 Years | Thomas Huckaby | 5 Years |
| • Harold Kennedy | 5 Years | Ronald Stewart | 5 Years |
| • Donald Drose | 5 Years | Melissa Ward | 5 Years |
| • Scott Danback | 5 Years | | |

4. Presentation – Rebecca Massey, Register of Deeds (ROD)

Ms. Massey began her presentation by giving Council an overview of the duties and responsibilities of the Register of Deeds Department. She continued by stating that the Register of Deeds office record deeds, plats, mortgages, federal tax liens, and any document pertaining to real estate transactions in Clarendon County. Ms. Massey continued by stating that the Register of Deeds office do not perform title searches, extensive record, lien searches, give legal advice or make legal recommendations.

Ms. Massey continued her presentation by stating that Attorneys, paralegals, Title abstractors, Surveyors, and Members of the public use the Register of Deeds Office. She concluded her presentation by stating the ROD future projects are to make more documents available online and the creation of an index for plats before 1995.

Chairman Stewart thanked Ms. Massey for her Presentation and he stated that Clarendon County Register of Deeds Office is second to none and it is good to have documents online.

5. Board Appointments

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to re-appoint the following members to the Clarendon County Development Board to serve another 3-year term: Mr. Linzy Washington, Mr. Roger Flowers, Mr. Barry Ham, Mr. GG Cutter, Mr. Steve Gamble, Mr. Blake Gibbons, and Mr. Robert Boykin.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Councilman English, Council voted Unanimous Approval to appoint Mr. Matthew Prince and Mr. Ken Wells to the Clarendon County Development Board to serve a 3-year term.

6. Public Hearing – Ordinance 2021-10

Chairman Stewart stated that the public hearing was now open for Ordinance 2021-10 – An Ordinance Providing for the Creation and Establishment of Election Districts for the Election of a Governing Body of Clarendon County as Provided for in South Carolina Code Annotated Section 4-9-90 Based on the 2020 Decennial Census. He stated that we are working to finalize the maps. The Public Hearing opened at 6:11 pm.

Mr. Epperson stated that on November 8, 2021, at the regular scheduled Council Meeting, we obtained information from Mr. Frank Rainwater who presented Council with the results of the 2020 Census. He stated that the total population declined 10.94% in ten years. Mr. Epperson continued by stating that under Federal Law, the decrease in population must be under 10% and the prison population cannot be included.

Mr. Epperson continued by stating that in order to bring the deviation down in Clarendon County, we will have to move people from District two and add them to District three. He continued by stating that we feel like this plan is the least effect to voting. He further stated that Clarendon County is a single member district and to change that would require a referendum.

- Mr. Moyer Graham, Chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party, stated that we have to be fair to all of the people in Clarendon County and future growth is being fueled by Lake Marion and I-95. He stated that he wants a level playing field. Mr. Graham continued by stating that the Republican Party will continue to grow and demographic matters.
- Mr. George Frierson stated that Lee County mirrored Clarendon County and they have a seven-member district.
- Mr. Robert McFadden stated that what we have, we had since 1972 and we need better. He stated that we do not want to go back to 1972.
- Mrs. Mary Cooper stated that the prisoners are people and who are counting them.
- Administrator Epperson stated that we are following the state re-districting.
- Mrs. Mary Cooper stated that the people are not satisfied and can we look at a referendum.
- Mrs. Patricia Pringle, Chairman of the Democratic Party stated that we appreciate everything that County Council is doing to have the re-districting and some point in time, we will have to make changes.
- Mr. Robert McFadden asked why we can't have seven single-member districts.
- Mr. Larry Johnson stated that we are moving prisoners in and out of the county and what is the Federal Government appropriation for prisoners. It's all about equity and equality and are we receiving money for prisoners.
- Administrator Epperson replied by stating that the county does not receive direct funding for prisoners from the Federal Government.
- Mr. Johnson asked why not?

- Administrator Epperson stated that the State might receive funds, but the County does not get funds.
- Mr. George Frierson stated that a prison is the worst thing that you can have in your county, and you do not get a return on your investment.
- A Citizen stated that this is a moral act and Immigrants can't vote but they are represented, and all people must be represented including prisoners.
- Chairman Stewart asked what is the time frame for a referendum.
- Administrator Epperson stated that stature 4.9.10 states that in order to change the make-up, we would need a Referendum, Special Election to consider the change and a Public Hearing. The time frame would be the middle of March and it must be decided at the February Council Meeting.
- Mr. Robert McFadden stated that he needs a copy of the documents because the documents that he just read does not ask for a referendum.
- Chairman Stewart stated that the Citizens can make the decision.
- A Citizen asked why we can't all just get along and look out for everyone not just yourselves, not Republicans nor Democratic.
- A Citizen asked about mobile home repairs.
- Administrator Epperson replied by stating that the County designed 1.5 Million dollars for non-profit in low to moderate areas.

Chairman Stewart asked if there were any additional comments, hearing now he stated that the Public Hearing will close. The Public Hearing closed at 7:15 pm.

Administrator Epperson stated that we have to adopt the current maps and then move forward with a referendum and a Resolution by the Middle of August

- Vice Chairman Frierson stated that the groups would have to work together with a third-party consulting to assist.
- Administrator Epperson stated that we need to pass the County plan tonight as it and we have to have the referendum to Voters Registration by March 15, 2022.
- Councilman Richardson asked what if other people have plans.
- Administrator Epperson stated that we can have presentations at the Weldon and other areas of the County.
- Councilman Richardson asked would we need a public hearing for this.
- Administrator Epperson replied by stating that yes, we will.

7. Ordinance 2021-10

On motion by Councilman Vice Chairman Frierson and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Second Reading of Ordinance 2021-10 – An Ordinance Providing for the Creation and Establishment of Election Districts for the Election of a Governing Body of Clarendon County as Provided for in South Carolina Code Annotated Section 4-9-90 Based on the 2020 Decennial Census.

8. Financial Report

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

- **The General Fund** had Expenditures of \$11,343,112 and Revenue figures were not available as of December 31, 2021.
- **Weldon Auditorium** had income of \$6,927 for the month ending December, 2021 and total Expenses were \$109,744. He stated that the Weldon Auditorium ended the month of December 2021 after transfers with a Net Deficit of \$45,603.
- **Water and Sewer Department** – had total Revenue of \$671,689 for the month ending December 31, 2021 and total Expenses were \$358,357. After Depreciation, Bond Interest Expense, Interest income and USDA Phase II, the Water and Sewer Department ended the month ending December 31, 2021 with a Net Utility Income of \$76,993.
- **The C-Fund Program** - for the month ending December 31, 2021, The C-Fund program had a Cash Balance of \$3,638,359 of which \$2,930,475 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 \$707,884 as of the end of December 2021.

12. Administrator's Report

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

Water / Sewer

- **Phase II Water Expansion** – Work has begun, and pipes are being laid. The project is proceeding as planned.
- HWY 260 Sewer Expansion – design is ongoing . (ARPA Funds)

Capital

- **Fire Rescue** – County is in the process of continuing to secure property within the Town of Turbeville for the construction of a new fire station. Once property is secured, design will begin.
-County is also continuing to move forward with pricing on a new fire station in Davis Station. This will be located on property currently owned by the County not far from the current fire station in Davis Station.
- **Animal Control** – County is in the process of developing plans to construct a new animal control facility to replace its current one. The plans call for better access to the pens by staff, additional pens for the animals and an improved sewer system. This project is being developed in collaboration with the Clarendon County Sheriff's Office and the Second Chance Animal Shelter.

COVID-19 – as of January 6, 2022

- Active Cases (from the last 14 days) – 618
- Total Deaths - 138

Public Outreach Efforts

- We continue to push out information regarding the ways the public can protect itself and their families and encourage our citizens to get vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine whenever they are eligible to do so. Vaccines are accessible to our citizens through different providers throughout the County.

County Operations

- All employees continue to operate on normal schedules. Protocols remain in place for employees who test positive for COVID and employees who are quarantined. PPE continues to be provided to staff as requested.
- Masks are not required to be worn in County Facilities by the public but are strongly recommended.
- All county facilities remain open to the public during normal operating hours.

Miscellaneous

- **Solid Waste** – Our solid waste department continues to install informational signage that will be at all recycling centers explaining hours of operation, what waste is accepted and when. They have also prepared paper handouts that have been mailed and will continue to prepare and distribute additional educational materials moving forward. All information will continue to be disseminated to all schools and community organizations in Clarendon County. We anticipate that this information will help educate our residents on our solid waste program and answer any questions they may have.

Recreation – Basketball games have begun and are planned for January and February.

- Baseball/Softball started today and will run until the end of January.
- Registration is available online or in-person at the Clarendon County Recreation Department Offices in Manning (JC Britton Park) and Turbeville (Smith Field).

➤ **County Holiday** – County Offices will be closed in Observance of Martin Luther King Day on January 17, 2022

13. Chairman's Report

Chairman Stewart began his report by reminding everyone that County Council will be having a winter retreat in February and the purpose for the retreat is to make some long-term decisions for the County. He concluded his report by stating that he is very proud and please to serve with the gentlemen of on Clarendon

County Council. Chairman Stewart thanked County Council, Administrator Epperson, and Ms. Levy for working to make Clarendon County a better place to live.

14. Adjourn

Chairman Stewart stated that we have exhausted our agenda and he stated that the Regular Council Meeting is now adjourned.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.



Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dorothy M. Levy".

Dorothy M. Levy
Clerk to Clarendon County Council, CCC