

**MINUTES
COLLETON COUNTY COUNCIL
VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

Colleton County Council met on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 6:00 PM, Virtually. Steven Murdaugh called the meeting to order with Council Members Dr. Joseph Flowers, Art Williams, Gene Whetsell Phillip Taylor in attendance (via zoom)

Others included: Kevin Griffin, Ruth Mayer, Sean Thornton, Jon Carpenter, Meagan Utsey

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

Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting January 5, 2021

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Dr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Taylor.

The motion carried unanimously.

Appearances & Public Presentations

Southern Carolina Alliance Quarterly Report – Mr. Brantley Strickland gave an overview of all of the activities for 2020.

In his Name Lowcountry Shelter – Mr. Stacey Sea (?) gave an overview of what they do at the present time and what additional services they have projected and need for the future.

Mr. Murdaugh said one of the items on executive session is the Coroner. He will not be here this evening so I was going to make a motion to amend the agenda to remove Item “a” under item 13 (executive session) a personnel matter with the Coroner. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Administrator’s Briefing

Mr. Griffin said he had a few items, but much more detail information in your council report. We are starting to get a little clearer picture of where we are overall with our revenues this year. Obviously they have been hard to chart because of Covid situation and what impacts we have around the county in that situation. It’s actually a little brighter picture than we anticipated. The overall county revenues actually continued to track our budget amounts that we have had for the year. We are still seeing some fluctuation in our sales taxes. We also have a Capitol Project real estate offset sales tax that has

fluctuated a little bit, but our actual overall real property is coming in a little bit ahead of where we were. Obviously we are going to be looking in the next month or so to see what the State plans to do with their budget regarding the revenue fact down to the counties and the changes that were made there overall with our local government fund last year that were not implemented this year. I also would like to compliment our department heads and elected officials on the expenditure side we are actually, our expenses are 95% of what they were last year at this time. They have really done a good job of buckling down and that is really impressive thinking of the fact that all the things we have had to do with Covid. The additional things with the PPE with the dividers and protective devises within the offices and the additions we have had to do there. Really impressed and appreciate those folks in taking it seriously as we have moved along.

The governor announced this morning that Phase 1B will go into effect for vaccinations on Monday. Had a call with David Greene and our folks at Fire-Rescue & EMD this morning and we are working on a plan both with the hospital and DHEC now to try to get started as soon as possible in the next few weeks vaccinations both for our county teachers and our county employees that are eligible under this new phase of vaccination rounds. Hopefully we will have more information on that for you very soon. We will work those plans into here in the next few days.

I will probably get some information back out to you later on this month because we have been approached again by the Technical College of the Lowcountry. They are interested in a new training agreement at the Careers Skill Center. As you know we feel real good with the agreement we have now with both LCOG and Palmetto Training there, but it appears that TCL is trying to work agreement with Palmetto Training to provide similar training, but the just got that information late last week, so don't have enough to assess it and get some information back out to you, but hopefully we will have such sometime next week or two. We are planning right now about having our 1st budget workshop the end of March, 1st part of April. I imagine that will likely be an item on the agenda then for discussion.

Mr. Murdaugh said he had a question not related to what you were talking about. When they start the demolition on the building are they going to close that parking lot in front of the Harrelson Building also? How will the people access in and out?

Mr. Griffin said actually it is a phase plan. They will be closing that and they are also going to close Jefferies down for a day or two. They have got to because that building actually goes right up to the road. A portion of it may even go up under the road they are not sure, but they've got some plans in place to reinforce and handle that, but they will actually have to shut down Jefferies Blvd. for a little while to get that front portion down.

New Business

Emergency Ordinance 21-O-03, Temporarily Suspending the Existing Procedures for Conducting Meetings of the Colleton County Council and Its Boards and Commissions to the Extent Necessary to Protect the Citizens of Colleton County, Colleton County Staff,

Board and Commission Members, and County Council Members from the COVID-19 Pandemic and Establishing Temporary Procedures for Such Meetings.

A motion to approve the ordinance was made by Dr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Taylor.

The motion carried unanimously.

Emergency Ordinance 21-O-04, An Emergency Ordinance Requiring That Face Coverings Or Masks Be Worn In Public In The City Of Walterboro And The Unincorporated Areas Of Colleton County During The Covid-19 Public Health Emergency And Recovery.

A motion to approve the ordinance was made by Dr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Whetsell.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 21-R-04, To Declare February as Black History Month in Colleton County.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 21-R-05, To Establish Priorities for the 2021 Annual CDBG County Needs Assessment.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 21-R-06, To Authorize the Sole Source Purchase of Generac Generators for a Period Not to Exceed Five Years.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 21-R-07, To Award the Contract in Accordance with Bid FM-53 for the Chehaw Pier Replacement

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 21-R-08, To Authorize the Council Clerk to Advertise for Board Vacancies

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Williams and seconded by Mr. Taylor.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 21-R-09, To approve a Change Order for the Islandton Fire Station Expansion Project.

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

The motion carried 4-1 Mr. Williams opposing

Council Time

Mr. Williams- I have some comments. I want to thank the Administrator for handling some road situations that we had that came up during the real rain storms we have been having as well as responding to a last minute request that I had for him today on the mask situation and I would also like to thank the Roads & Bridges supervisor, Bill Washington and Frankie Varnadoe as well as Ms. Carla Harvey the County Engineer. I also want to thank Matt Mardell, the museum director and Ms. Eartha Cunningham, they did an awesome job hosting a Black History Program this past Friday night. They did an excellent job, so thanks to all of them.

Mr. Murdaugh – He was going to make a commit about roads. When I was 1st elected to council a long time ago you were going to get a phone call every week about roads, but I can honestly say I have not gotten a lot of calls about roads. The times that I do get them is times like when we have gone through this flooding. The calls I have received I have tried to encourage people that I know it is hard to be patient when you can't get out of your driveway, but at the same time, there is not a lot we can do until we get some dry weather, which hopefully will be on the way. I think that is an issue we will probably get more phone calls about here in the near future.

Dr. Flowers – Thanked the administrator for the great report he sends out each month to the council members. It is great information and gives us insight of what is going on in the county.

Executive Session

a) Real Estate – Fire-Rescue

Item was discussed in Executive Session.

No further actions were taken and 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**