

MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2022
REGULAR MEETING
6:00 P.M.

Colleton County Council
Council Chambers, Old Jail Building
109 Benson Street
Walterboro, SC 29488

Present: Chairman Steven Murdaugh called the meeting to order with Council Members Dr. Joseph Flowers, Phillip Taylor, and Art Williams in attendance, with Council Member Gene Whetsell appearing virtually.

Others Included: Kevin Griffin, Sean Thornton, Meagan Utsey, Jon Carpenter, Kaela Brinson, Barry McRoy, Joshua Rowland, Ed Williams, Felicia Johnson, Scott Biering, Crawford Moore, Iris Hill, Mark Aakhus, Clarence Wiggins, Anderson Grant, Linda Singleton, Johnny Bartley, Austin Ruger, and Frank Santorella.

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

Approval of Minutes

- A. Regular Meeting July 26, 2022— Councilman Taylor moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on July 26, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams and the motion carried unanimously.

Awards and Recognitions

- A. Proclaiming September 24, 2022 as “I Love Ruffin Day” in Colleton County— Chairman Murdaugh read the Proclamation aloud. Councilman Taylor moved to adopt Proclaiming September 24, 2022 as “I Love Ruffin Day” in Colleton County. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams and the motion carried unanimously.

Administrator’s Briefing

Mr. Griffin: Stated, under “New Business” item “A”, there is a county wide business license registration ordinance that the council previously discussed. This is not a business license, which is based on gross revenue, this is a \$15.00 business registration fee. This came about through the Sheriff’s Office dealing with some nuisance businesses. That is on the agenda for first reading tonight. Item “B” under “New Business” is the Edisto Canoe Trail and Kayak Committee, they are adjusting their bylaws to get a little more membership. They have a very specific membership for that commission and they are broadening that, as well as, working with Dorchester County across county lines. Those are the only items I have to discuss and I will be glad to take any questions.

Councilman Williams: Stated, you mentioned that this would not be a business license but rather a registration fee. Would we have the same leverage to deal with our nuisance businesses?

Mr. Griffin: Stated, we would.

Old Business

- A. **2nd Reading Ordinance 22-O-11, To Establish Chapter 2.80 – Board of Assessment Appeals, of Title 2 – Administration and Personnel of the Colleton County Code of Ordinances, to Provide for the Establishment of the Colleton County Board of Assessment Appeals**

Dr. Flowers to approve the 2nd Reading Ordinance 22-O-11, To Establish Chapter 2.80 – Board of Assessment Appeals, of Title 2 – Administration and Personnel of the Colleton County Code of Ordinances, to Provide for the Establishment of the Colleton County Board of Assessment Appeals. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor.

New Business

- A. **1st Reading Ordinance 22-O-12, By Title Only, To Adopt Title 5 – Business Licenses and Regulations, Chapter 5.02 – Countywide Business Registration, of the Colleton County Code of Ordinances**

Councilman Taylor moved to approve the 1st Reading Ordinance 22-O-12, By Title Only, To Adopt Title 5 – Business Licenses and Regulations, Chapter 5.02 – Countywide Business Registration, of the Colleton County Code of Ordinances. The motion was seconded by Dr. Flowers. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, I know we have just raised the issue about the authority of the county business registration versus licensing, is that something that at second reading that we can go more into detail about?

Mr. Griffin: Stated, we can and it is very specific in state law what we can do there and it will be listed in the ordinance at second reading.

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, the main reason I was wanting it to be there is in case anyone has any questions about it.

Dr. Flowers: Stated, I feel the same way with wanting more information.

No further comment.

- B. **1st Reading Ordinance 22-O-13, By Title Only, To Amend Chapter 2.48 – Edisto River Canoe and Kayak Trail Commission to Update Commission Bylaws**

Councilman -Williams moved to approve the 1st Reading Ordinance 22-O-13, By Title Only, To Amend Chapter 2.48 – Edisto River Canoe and Kayak Trail Commission to

Update Commission Bylaws. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

C. **1st Reading Ordinance 22-O-14, By Title Only, To Ratify FY22 Grant And Budget Resolutions And Related Appropriations For All Funds; To Ratify Transfer And Other Resolutions Previously Authorized By Council; And Other Matters Related Thereto**

Dr. Flowers moved to approve the 1st Reading Ordinance, By Title Only, To Ratify FY22 Grant And Budget Resolutions And Related Appropriations For All Funds; To Ratify Transfer and Other Resolutions Previously Authorized by Council; And Other Matters Related Thereto. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

D. **Resolution 22-R-40, To Appoint Employees to the Colleton County Grievance Committee**

Dr. Flowers moved to approve Resolution 22-R-40, To Appoint Employees to the Colleton County Grievance Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

E. **Resolution 22-R-41, To Appoint Members to the Colleton County Safety Committee**

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 22-R-41, To Appoint Members to the Colleton County Safety Committee. The motion was seconded by Dr. Flowers. The motion carried unanimously.

F. **Resolution 22-R-42, To Authorize the Acceptance of a Grant from the South Carolina Department of Social Services for the Child and Adult Care Food Program Grant for 2023**

Dr. Flowers moved to approve Resolution 22-R-42, To Authorize the Acceptance of a Grant from the South Carolina Department of Social Services for the Child and Adult Care Food Program Grant for 2023. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Taylor: Stated, just know there is no local match needed for that. It is always good.

Councilman Williams: Stated, absolutely, I know the children benefit from that.

No further comment.

G. Resolution 22-R-43, To Approve a Memorandum of Understanding between Colleton County, the SC Department of Veterans' Affairs and Combined Arms, Inc. for Veterans' Services

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 22-R-43, To Approve a Memorandum of Understanding between Colleton County, the SC Department of Veterans' Affairs and Combined Arms, Inc. for Veterans' Services. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Taylor: Stated, Is there any clarity on if they have a local office or group?

Councilman Williams: Stated, from what I understand it to say you will still have to go through Ms. Smith's office. I think they went through a different method of reporting structure where they have you in certain regions, whereas before people did their own thing and reported to Columbia or DC. Now, there are regional directors and rest of them fit under that umbrella.

Dr. Flowers: Stated, it is something they can utilize for various needs.

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, we are not actually a party to that if you read it. It is between the state and Combined Arms. One thing in the memorandum paragraph 9 talks about dispute resolution and paragraph 12 it talks about indemnity of defense. I noticed that they put in here any term or condition is void if it requires the State of South Carolina to indemnify, defend, or pay attorney's fees to anyone for any reason. I guess the county is not listed there...inaudible. That maybe the only thing we want to inquire about. I think Dr. Flowers is right, the services being provided is probably services were these issues would never arise, but we are looking at the agreement and I notice the state put in safety provisions for them in there and I think we don't have the same in there.

Dr. Flowers: Inaudible (There is a lot of background noise at this time.)

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, that is the only thing I have to point out.

Dr. Flowers: Inaudible (There is a lot of background noise at this time.)

Councilman Taylor: Stated, many of the veterans need assistance with filling out paper work and going online.

H. Resolution 22-R-44, To Approve and Authorize Implementation of the Amended Colleton County Safety Policy Manual

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 22-R-44, To Approve and Authorize Implementation of the Amended Colleton County Safety Policy Manual. The motion was seconded by Dr. Flowers. The motion carried unanimously.

I. Resolution 22-R-45, To Declare Surplus Various Vehicles and Equipment and to Authorize Their Sale in Accordance with County Policy

Dr. Flowers moved to approve Resolution 22-R-45, To Declare Surplus Various Vehicles and Equipment and to Authorize Their Sale in Accordance with County Policy. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

J. Resolution 22-R-46, To Award the Contract for Design Build Services for the County Plaza and ADA Sidewalk Improvements Project

Councilman Williams moved to approve Resolution 22-R-46, To Award the Contract for Design Build Services for the County Plaza and ADA Sidewalk Improvements Project. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

K. Resolution 22-R-47, To Authorize the Council Clerk to Advertise for Board Vacancies

Dr. Flowers moved to approve Resolution 22-R-47, To Authorize the Council Clerk to Advertise for Board Vacancies. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

L. Resolution 22-R-48, To Appoint Members to Board Vacancies

Dr. Flowers moved to approve Resolution 22-R-48, To Appoint Members to Board Vacancies. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

The following appointments were made by acclamation: Janis Blocker, Sally Williams, and Sylvia Rowland – Colleton County Library Board of Trustees, Gary Herman – Edisto River Canoe & Kayak Committee, Richard Shealy – Keep Colleton Beautiful, and Kelly Judy – Colleton County Board of Assessment Appeals.

Public Comment

Felicia Johnson: Stated, I am back again because we still don't have a change. This club needs to close. I am disabled, insomnia, fibromyalgia, I got it all, metal plates and screws. It is sad, Mr. Hill came to my house last month and he is still not talking justice. I do not get it. This woman is a convicted felon of federal prison and she is out here running a club with no license for alcohol or food. I have talked to DEHEC in Walterboro and they are no good. Ms. Katrina from Beaufort is the only one to respond to that part, because she is telling Ms. Bodison that she cooked it at her restaurant and brought it here. She is not telling the truth. This is Walterboro, I can't lie, my sons hang there and got sick eating your food. The trash is all out there, and I took pictures of it. I tell my grands they can't stay with grandma no more. My home in the past has been shot. Father's day morning when all that was going on, I was under my bed. I was scared. I heard 15-20 rounds and they were still shooting. When is it going to stop? I can't thank the Lord that the other club is closed down because it is worse for us now. These people don't stop until 2-3 in the morning. I can go on the transit bus and they ask me how do I live there when the club is still open at 7 in the

morning. I am trying to get ready to go to church and the noise. I got my big no trespassing sign up, and what did the man do? He took my sign up on Easter. I do not want them tying up from front door with a crime scene when I come home. I told the man in front of the police if he comes back taking up my property it is going to be on you. I am not a violent person, but if my sign says "no trespassing" why are you taking it up out the ground? My next-door neighbor, they have kids and they asked to borrow an extra crate that I had in my yard. I use the other one to store my grandkids toys in, and what did the man who stole my sign do? He stole my grandkids toys. We want peace! I want my grandkids staying the night with me, but like I said I am afraid. They are having strippers over at this place, and we don't need that around us. We are a little small community, we do not need that. I am totally disabled from head to foot and we need y'all. The governor wrote me again last week, he said that he needs more information. I called them and the lady told me about the Bureau of Investigation. Are you not reporting that you are renting the building to a convicted felon, a drug dealer that just got out of prison? That is why I say what is wrong with the law enforcement around here. I have stood outside talking to some of them at 3-4 in the morning. They say they know that it is illegal, but if you know it is illegal then why are you not doing your job? That Saturday when they were getting ready to bury the two brothers... I was talking to an officer who said he is tired of coming to the club. Well guess what, I am tired of it being open and I am not going to stop calling you. If I am trying to sleep and all these calls are lining up at 2:30-3 am, and you can smell all the drugs out there. I went to Walmart and I was talking with the Pharmacist assistant, and she said she went there one time and could not breathe. I went up there one time just so she would serve the alcohol to me, so that I would have my own proof. Then there is gambling inside there and I let my son hold a table and I got my own proof; you don't go by here say. There is a lot of people doing a lot of illegal stuff in this club. We need help... please help us. I am not giving up because I want to have peace. The next stop is Lindsey Graham and then the President. Again, y'all please help us.

Linda Singleton: Stated, I live in the same neighborhood that Felicia does. You don't get any peace around there. It is constant noise, and something needs to be done. We need peace in our neighborhood, that shouldn't be too much to ask. Why do we have a club in our neighborhood? I don't know what else we can do but what we are doing now? Please let us know if there is something else we should be doing. On Father's Day night I was laying in my bed and heard all the gun shots, it sounded like a war going on. Please help us, we need help!

Kevin Williams: Stated, I want to see some change in our community as well. I want to start seeing some changes with our school board, and County Council and the school board go hand in hand. Everybody is worried about the violence, but that starts with the schools. So, until we start acknowledging what is going on with the schools, nothing is going to change because it is trickling out of the schools, into the streets, and back into the schools. The school board and county council need to get together and implement something that is going to work on the community. I talked to a few of y'all and I go around the community to see change. I keep trying and I am not seeing change. Until County Council and the school board get together, we're not going to see change. I understand that we are doing projects around the community, it is looking a whole lot better. I love what I am seeing. The main strip looks beautiful now, but what about your rural areas? Smoaks needs their community center rebuilt, Jacksonboro needs their community building upgraded, and

Neyles has a nice one. There are a lot of places that are receiving nothing, and I mean I get it, but I do not get it at the same time, because if you want something to help the community grow and do better, you got to start with the youth but also with us adults taking accountability. I am only 33 years old and I take accountability, but at the same time when it comes down to the community stepping forward, it is not happening. Two young ladies just spoke up about their neighborhood. When is it going to change? Are they going to have to come into your neighborhood, and where y'all live? Let's be honest, it's true. It will escalate and it will move. We need to take the time and everybody get together and work a plan...Law Enforcement, School Board, County Council. Until we start fixing these things they are going to be an issue. I have been to these school meetings. My nephew was causing problems and I had to fix him. I am only one person, I talk to people and help where I can. Take these kids off the street and give them a chance. Teach them fire rescue and paramedic skills. Teach them something that this community is going to need.

Kellye Whitaker (online comment): *Read aloud by Meagan Utsey below.

Comment 1: "Was there an August meeting? Requesting that the agenda and minutes be posted as soon as possible. I'm on your website and it shows July as the last meeting and only the agenda is posted. No minutes."

Comment 2: "July meeting minutes has not been uploaded to the website. Could you please post ASAP? Thank you."

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated the July minutes were approved tonight and they will go up in a couple of days on the website.

Council Time

Councilman Williams: Stated, Ms. Johnson the Ordinance 22-O-12 that we just spoke about, that is the first sign of progress in trying to solve some of the issues you are having and other members in the community. It is a process that we must go through and I know you are the person that has to be around it, but rest assured the council is trying to do what they need to do because it is a legal process. We don't want to do something that the county will get sued about, so we have to follow the proper processes and procedures.

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, I agree.

Councilman Williams: Stated, where are we with the joint meeting with the school board, council, town, and other municipalities?

Councilman Murdaugh: Stated, that is on me and since you brought it up let's go ahead and pick a date now so I do not have to arbitrarily schedule one. Does anyone have a preference on the night of the week?

Councilman Williams: Stated, we have Edisto Beach here. They may have some input on this if you do not mind.

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, is there a particular night as I know most councils meet on Tuesday?

Mayor Moore: Stated, Thursday nights are our council meeting nights...the 2nd and 1st.

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, we will shoot for Monday, October 3rd. That gives us enough time to let all the bodies know. I assume we would have to do this somewhere like the museum or wildlife center. Kevin or Kaela, if you would check and see if the Wildlife Center is available. We will set this for October 3rd at 6 PM. I would suggest that we allow each municipality a few minutes to discuss things within their municipality. I think 10 minutes would be good so we don't go on to long.

Councilman Taylor: Asked, should it be free or set topics?

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, if we are holding them to 10 minutes, I think they should be able to talk about what ever it is they would like.

Councilman Williams: Stated, are we going to invite the Sheriff's Office too?

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, yes we can.

Councilman Williams: Stated, I think it would be nice to have the Sheriff's Office there as well.

No further comments.

Executive Session


Dr. Flowers moved to go into executive session to discuss the following: Personnel – Solid Waste, Contractual – Airport Commission, and Economic Development – Project Lion and Project Mac. Councilman Taylor seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Taylor moved to exit executive session. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Councilman Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting, Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

This 4th day of October, 2022.



Steven D. Murdaugh, Chairman

ATTEST:



Kaela Brinson, Clerk to Council