

**MINUTES  
COLLETON COUNTY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2017  
6:00 P.M.  
COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, OLD JAIL BUILDING**

Colleton County Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at 6:00 PM, at the County Council Chambers, Old Jail Building. Sean Thornton, County Attorney called the meeting to order with Council Members Steven Murdaugh, Gene Whetsell, Dr. Flowers, Evon Robinson, Phillip Taylor in attendance.

Others present included: Kevin Griffin, Ruth Mayer, Iris Hill, Jane Darby, Eleanor Hodges, Isreal Hodges, Audrey Brown, Mark Pinckney, Suzanne Gant, Herbert Brown, Roosevelt Chaplin, Jessica Goodwin, Fannie M???, Nate Bristow, Kelli Griffin, Sheriff Andy Strickland, Roy Williams, James Rutledge

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

**Post 2016 Election & Formative Actions:**

- a) Seating of Chairman-Joseph Flowers (In accordance to Ordinance11-O-02)
- b) Seating of Vice-Chairman-Gene Whetsell (In accordance to Ordinance11-O-02)
- c) Chairman's Appointment of Standing Committees
- d) Confirmation of Council Members to LCOG (Flowers, Robinson, Whetsell)
- e) Chairman's Designation of Three Members of Council to LCAA Board
- f) Election of one member of Council to Airport Commission

Mr. Thornton said in pursuant to Ordinance 11-O-02 at this time I recognize the incoming chairman of County Council Dr. Joseph Flowers because of the rotation is now chairman of County Council and will turn the meeting over to him at this time.

Dr. Flowers welcomed everyone present tonight and hoped everyone had a good holiday season.

Dr. Flowers said next we have seating of Vice-Chairman In accordance to Ordinance11-O-02, the seating of the Vice-Chairman will be Mr. Gene Whetsell.

Dr. Flowers said we move on to the appointment of Standing Committees I think we need to leave them as they are if it suits the other members of council.

Mr. Murdaugh made a motion to approve the chairman's recommendation and was seconded by Mr. Whetsell.

The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Flowers said Lowcountry Council of Governments, I serve, Mr. Robinson serves and Mr. Whetsell serves, does anyone else want to serve on that or leave the same.

Mr. Robinson made a motion to leave it as is and Mr. Taylor seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Flowers said the next one is the LCCA board the present members are Mr. Robinson, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Whetsell.

Mr. Robinson made a motion that the said names continue to serve.

Dr. Flowers said this was appointments by the council chairman he wanted them to remain if they were willing to continue to serve.

The current council members agreed to continue to serve.

The clerk asked the chairman if she could clarify for her records the following names and designees. Mr. Robinson has designated Mr. Ed Williams, Mr. Whetsell has designated Mr. Harry Jenkins and Mr. Taylor will serve.

Council members all agreed that was correct.

Dr. Flowers said next it says election of member to Airport Commission and I think in the past historically it has been appointed by the chairman also according to the history I've seen. I am going to designate Mr. Taylor as that member and I'll serve as chairman.

Mr. Robinson said are you talking about the Airport Commission. Is that right?

Dr. Flowers said yes, I think in the past, historically...inaudible... it said selected not elected according to the Ordinance. It has been appointed in the past by the chairman. Is that not right Mr. Murdaugh?

Mr. Murdaugh said that is how it was done in the past, the chairman appointed.

Dr. Flowers said we have Ms. Maxwell here from Southern Carolina Alliance. She has given us some information on SCA Marketing & Activities. Don't you want to give us a brief update? We will let you do that.

Ms. Maxwell briefed everyone on what Southern Carolina Alliance had accomplished during 2016. She also pointed out the new companies that had come to our region along with the expansion of existing companies creating additional jobs for the region. With new computer systems implemented, the Economic Development office and the Southern Carolina Alliance have tracking information on companies that they can both share giving them updated information. The systems also give them accessibility to find out information more readily when potential companies are asking questions.

Ms. Maxwell said they had put their plans together for 2017 and are already planning to participate in four marketing trips and trade shows with the State Department of Commerce and putting ours together as well. We will be providing more detailed report to you after ...inaudible...at the end of January.

Dr. Flowers said he wanted to recognize Senator Margie Bright-Matthews. She wanted to make a presentation.

Senator Margie Bright-Matthews thanked council members for allowing her to interject. A lot of people know I am from a large family. I am #9 in my family. I used to get up in the summertime @ 4:00AM from the age of 10, go down to Neyles Community Center to meet the farm bus. My dad was a workaholic and he instilled in us that we had to work hard for everything we get in life. We had to work for our school clothes and anything we wanted and we had to be on an allowance. I would catch the farm bus at Neyles. Sometimes we would wonder down to Neyles Community Center. Because we were operating with 9 kids and one vehicle, which was a pickup truck, we had to rely upon all of our recreation through the Neyles Community Center. My father was very vigilant about making sure that young folks in Colleton County love sports. He was vigilant about baseball and he wanted to make sure that he created baseball fields where ever, so Neyles, Cottageville, Burr Hill all of these back in the day I remember the area between from where I lived off of St. Peters Rd. it was created as a baseball field just so kids could come and play. He just felt that you keep kids busy and you keep them out of trouble. You create teamwork among kids. When I first ran for the Senate I knew I could go home and home was Neyles. Mashawville, Neyles, St. Peters, it all means the same because we are all family we grew up together, we strive together. The 1<sup>st</sup> group of people that came to see me when I got elected, they wouldn't stop, they came to my office around the table and told me Margie, you know that community center you always voted at and you used to enjoy. It is falling down. It is dilapidated and we need help. We need money. I made it my promise that I would make sure they got money. Not only my father's legacy of making sure we keep our kids active in this community, in the legacy ...inaudible... it has always been a complaint that county council and city council, that all of the money seems to stay out at the recreational area and every now and then the outer county areas might get \$5,000 - \$6,000 and you know you can't do much with that. I wanted to make sure that these kids that can't go anywhere and the elderly people would have some place to go. This is just a drop in the bucket. We are going to try to implement something in this county that a lot of counties have done around the state. These outer lying areas that are 15-20 miles away from the center, we are going to start putting money in those areas so that those children and those elderly folks can have something positive to do and would have to expend gas to do it. In that vein, when I got to the Senate, I started begging. Met with Sen. Leatherman, met with Ways & Means, got with Robert Brown and guess what after our efforts we were able to for Neyles Community Center and I want them to stand at this time, because these folks who have lobbied, they have filled out paperwork, they have done everything they need to do. I want whoever the representative is Mark, Audrey ya'll come on up. On behalf of the State of South Carolina I would like to present to the Neyles Community Center, \$400,000. If you get some time, please on behalf of the county of Colleton thank the Parks and Recreation. We still have a lot of work to do in Colleton County and Thank You for letting me know what we need to do. I've got some other begging I need to do in this upcoming session. I made them feel really bad that they had neglected Colleton County for so long.

Ms. Audrey Brown thanked Senator Bright-Matthews for not forgetting them and we appreciate you.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Regular Meeting December 6, 2016

Special Meeting December 16, 2016

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

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Administrator's Briefing**

Mr. Griffin said I want to point out in New Business we have a resolution to accept grant funds, industrial development funds from Coastal Electric in the amount of \$132,750. We do appreciate that. They continue to donate that to the park every year generally in January. When you get a chance to see those board members, please thank them. We do have under new business two items that have come up from the Planning Commission in regard to ADA ramps and campers and RV's. Mr. Slayter is here tonight to answer any questions since this is 1<sup>st</sup> reading if you any once that item comes up on the agenda or if you would like for him to answer them now he will. The last item on the agenda was added on after we sent the agenda out, which is a memorandum of understanding with the City of Walterboro. They are in need of some temporary building inspection services and our staff met with Mr. Molinari and myself last week to work that agreement out. If you have any questions I will be happy to answer those questions as well.

Mr. Murdaugh asked if the appeals process will go through the City or the County.

Mr. Griffin said they still have their own Building Board of Appeals, so it would go through theirs. We are just providing staff.

### **Public Hearing**

Ordinance 16-O-12, Authorizing the Acquisition of Certain Property by Colleton County, South Carolina by Lease-Purchase Financing in the Amount Of Not Exceeding \$2,000,000; the Execution and Delivery of Certain Instruments, Including a Lease-Purchase Agreement by Colleton County; and Other Matters Relating Thereto

No comments were made.

Ordinance 16-O-13, To Authorize Colleton County to join with the City of Walterboro and The Walterboro-Colleton County Airport Commission to Convey by Quit Claim Deed unto Sealcraft Corporation, as the Grantee, all of its rights, titles and interests, including but not limited to any and all reversionary interest, in an to the 5.00 acre, more or less, tract of land, situate in Colleton County, South Carolina, and being located in the Industrial Area at 418 Wellston Circle, Walterboro, SC 29488, and being designated as Colleton County TMS No. 132-00-00-019, and now owned by Sealcraft Corporation

No comments were made.

Ordinance 16-O-14, Authorizing the County of Colleton to join with the Walterboro-Colleton County Airport Commission and the City of Walterboro in Approving a Commercial Ground Lease for Lowcountry Aviation Company, LLC (Project C)

No comments were made.

**Old Business**

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Ordinance 16-O-15, to Amend the Agreement for Development for Joint County Industrial Park Executed by Colleton County on December 12, 2007 by and among Colleton County, South Carolina and Hampton County, South Carolina, Providing for the Development of a Multi-County Industrial Park, so as to Include Additional Property in that Portion of the Park Geographically Located in Colleton County, South Carolina and Other Matters Related Thereto.

A motion to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> reading was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Murdaugh.

The motion carried unanimously.

3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 16-O-12, Authorizing the Acquisition of Certain Property by Colleton County, South Carolina by Lease-Purchase Financing in the Amount Of Not Exceeding \$2,000,000; the Execution and Delivery of Certain Instruments, Including a Lease-Purchase Agreement by Colleton County; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.

A motion to approve 3<sup>rd</sup> reading was made by Mr. Whetsell and seconded by Mr. Murdaugh.

The motion carried unanimously.

3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 16-O-13, To Authorize Colleton County to join with the City of Walterboro and The Walterboro-Colleton County Airport Commission to Convey by Quit Claim Deed unto Sealcraft Corporation, as the Grantee, all of its rights, titles and interests, including but not limited to any and all reversionary interest, in an to the 5.00 acre, more or less, tract of land, situate in Colleton County, South Carolina, and being located in the Industrial Area at 418 Wellston Circle, Walterboro, SC 29488, and being designated as Colleton County TMS No. 132-00-00-019, and now owned by Sealcraft Corporation.

A motion to approve 3<sup>rd</sup> reading was made by Mr. Murdaugh and seconded by Mr. Whetsell.

The motion carried unanimously.

3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 16-O-14, Authorizing the County of Colleton to join with the Walterboro-Colleton County Airport Commission and the City of Walterboro in Approving a Commercial Ground Lease for Lowcountry Aviation Company, LLC (Project C)

A motion to approve 3<sup>rd</sup> reading was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Whetsell.

The motion carried unanimously.

### **New Business**

1<sup>st</sup> Reading Ordinance 17-O-01, To Amend Title 14-Land Management, Section 14.08-3.020(A)(7) – Accessory Structures and Uses, of the Colleton County Code of Ordinances to Address Residential Handicap Access Ramps.

A motion to approve 1<sup>st</sup> reading was made by Mr. Whetsell and seconded by Mr. Taylor

The motion carried unanimously.

1<sup>st</sup> Reading Ordinance 17-O-02, to Amend Title 14-Land Management, Article 14.08-2 - Zoning District Regulations and Article 14.08-3 – Conditional Uses of the Colleton County Code of Ordinances to Address Campers, RVs and Park Model Trailers as Living Accommodations.

A motion to approve 1<sup>st</sup> reading was made by Mr. Whetsell and seconded by Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Murdaugh asked Mr. Slayter if he could give them the practical impact of what this will do.

Mr. Slayter said the county has been struggling for a number of years with the growing presence of campers, park model trailers, which is another form of a recreational vehicle as well as other forms of recreational vehicles used as housing alternatives. The short answer is that county being increasingly pressured through the relocation of people suffering from loss of employment, in some cases mental health issues, domestic abuse issues, just general problems in their lives for which there is no easy housing option for them. As you might know the county has a long standing history of families growing up here, the older residents continue to live here after the kids are gone off to other parts of the US and overtime a lot of them come back and the come back because of a lot of the conditions I outlined. We have been suffering for a while trying to deal with fighting housing for a lot of these folks because of these conditions. They often times have very little income, if any and we are confronted with some very, very sad circumstances where people are living in tents, structures that in no way meet the building code, just a shed for a lack of a better of describing it. This has been going on for a number of years. We have been lucky in some instances, because we have a lot of good natured folks that have been offering up mobile homes for free and we have negotiated with those individuals to try to provide them housing. We have been lucky and a lot of that credit goes to the county administrator to help me with that to try to provide resources so that we can we can get those people in a suitable housing condition. That is a very small number. The only other option we have is to try to come up with alternative strategies to provide adequate housing for these people. This is the only way I know how to do it. Up until now it has been an enforcement problem and if we continue to close our eyes to it that is where it is going to remain. We do not have

the staff, resources to adequately deal with this if we leave it in its current condition. The solution the Planning Commission came to as a result of a fairly long discussion is to try to come up with a set of rules that reasonably accommodates these people that are in need and make no mistake they are in need, as well as try to comply with State Law and County Ordinances. What you have before you is our best shot at doing that. It is not a perfect solution, but at least it gives me a little flexibility to make sure these people have a safe decent place to live, if nothing else on an interim basis. I would like to say that over the long term, things will turn where all these folks will have permanent places to live, but I can't guarantee that. I do know that if we don't do something, then we are going to have a long term problem that is just going to get worse.

Mr. Whetsell said then, this thing provides for them to live in travel trailers.

Mr. Slayter said yes sir, permanently if necessary, but it does insure that there is adequate waste water treatment, water supply and part of this was driven by the need for the provision of power. That provision of power is also regulated through DHEC and so that is in part why we decided to act on this. This is kinda been a festering problem for a number of years.

Mr. Murdaugh said we are at 1<sup>st</sup> reading and not necessarily opposed to this. For me personally, suitable housing when you don't have housing takes a whole different meaning and I am very sympathetic to somebody who doesn't have a place. I don't want to make it so restrictive that we just basically ...inaudible... homeless but at the same time I certainly realize the county particularly in you have certain corridors of the county you have to clean up if we are going to have Economic Development and growth and things like that we have to, but I just don't want to forget the folks that are here and I am not saying that you are doing that. I know the commission voted on this unanimously, which ways in my views. I just read this with an eye towards those that are less fortunate, trying to balance it somehow.

Mr. Whetsell said seems to me that is what this is about.

Mr. Slayter said the Planning Commission was not insensitive to Mr. Murdaugh's point. It is not as if these units are allowed unilaterally everywhere. There are a lot of conditions that are put into place. There are certain zoning district where that is allowed. We tried to do our best to balance that need, relative to recognizing that...inaudible... we are taking active steps to make it a better place, nicer place and office an attractive location for industrial recruitment. It is going to be one of those this because like it or not the other counties that boarder us are all wealthy high end growing counties and so those folks that are unable to effectively survive in those environments are coming here and we have two choices, either we come up with a plan as best we can to accommodate them or we can turn the spicket off, but I promise you I will spend all of my time dealing with the magistrates trying to solve and they are not particularly keen on putting poor people in jail.

Mr. Taylor said I'm I hearing you that the flexibility you need in waste water management at DHEC is giving you that and utilities are working with you in regards to that as well.

Mr. Slayter said it's really, the dilemma is that the State requires that if you are going to have power regardless to how long you are there, regardless to the housing condition, whether it is a recreational vehicle or not in order to have power, you must have an approved waste water system, which means you've got to have a septic tank because that is the only option you have. That is what was driving the train. For a number of years and it was on my watch, we were allowing campers without the presence of the septic tank. Largely because most of the ones that were coming in the county were for recreational purposes for a short period of time, hunters, other campers, that kind of thing that just wanted to be close to the river for a short, a weekend or something like that. We were getting about 17-19 campers per year. That was manageable and was a fairly consistent number. Now, we are at anywhere from 35-40 campers a year and it is not so much recreation as it is a housing alternative and that number is going to increase. In talking with DHEC they sorta let me know clearly that the practice that we had been engaging is really not in conformity with State Law and that we need to rectify that. That is part of the reason why we undertook this.

Mr. Robinson said you are going to have these areas in the county various designations across the county.

Mr. Slayter said yes. The bulk of the rural area of the county will be eligible. A lot of the urban area that is to say immediately in and around Walterboro with certain special conditions, you might be able to do it, but the thresholds for doing that are a lot greater then as you get further and further out.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 17-R-01, To Remove Member From The Colleton County Memorial Library Board of Trustees.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 17-R-02, To Approve Acceptance of a Grant from Coastal Electric Cooperative in the amount of \$132,750.00 for Industrial Infrastructure Development.

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

The motion carried unanimously.



Resolution 17-R-03, To Authorize the Purchase of Equipment by the Capital Projects and Purchasing Department.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 17-R-04, To Accept State Lottery Funds to be received by the Library in Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 17-R-05, To Authorize Acceptance and Budgeting of Grant Funding for FY 2016-2017.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 17-R-06, To Declare Surplus Various Vehicles and Equipment and to Authorize Their Sale in Accordance with County Policy.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 17-R-07, To Approve Purchase and Installation of a Generac Generator and Transfer Switch for the Old Jail Building.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 17-R-08, To Authorize the Council Clerk to Advertise for Board Vacancies.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 17-R-09, To Approve a Memorandum of Understanding And Agreement between Colleton County and the City of Walterboro to provide Temporary Building Inspection Services.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

**Items for Information and Public Record**

None

**Public Comments**

None

**Council Time**

Mr. Murdaugh said I would like to say and I know she is not here, but Senator Bright-Matthews, I've been here now 18 years and I maybe wrong, but never recall a Senator coming in and presenting a check. They could have, but it has been a long time. This just highlights how important it is to have a resident senator or anything, which is something we haven't had in a long time. I wish she was here to hear it, but I wanted to thank her for the money she got and for being here more importantly...inaudible...the community certainly got a big gift. Again, I wanted to thank the Senator personally and she is our resident senator.

Dr. Flowers said also wanted to recognize the Mayor of Edisto and the administrator. Wanted to recognize the Sheriff, who was re-elected.

**Executive Session**

Contractual – Law Enforcement Center

**Regular Session**

Dr. Flowers said the item was discussed in executive session.

No further actions were taken.

The meeting was adjourned.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Joseph F. Flowers, Chairman

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ruth Mayer, Clerk to Council

**\*\*\*\*\* NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**