

## **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

### **Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.**

Chairman Scott Biering called the meeting to order with Council Members Steve Murdaugh, Phillip Taylor, Bubba Trippe, and Johnny Frank in attendance.

Others Included: Meagan Utsey, Sean Thornton, Jon Carpenter, Barry McRoy, Robert Renner, Joey Bagwell, Angela Upchurch, Carl Coffin, Queenie Crawford, Janis Blocker, Celia Price, Kimber Santorella, Tim Hamilton, Patricia Grant, Lynn Stroble, Felicia Johnson, Jeffrey Jones, Chester Bright, Dale Euga, Steve Atherton, Art Williams, Dr. Wright, Dr. Jenkins

Councilman Bubba Trippe gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman Taylor made a motion to amend the agenda to add an Executive Session item that is a legal and contractual matter involving the Green Pond Community Center. The motion was seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. The motion was carried unanimously.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

a) Regular Meeting, February 4, 2025

Councilman Murdaugh moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on February 4, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor and the motion carried unanimously.

b) Special Meeting, February 18, 2025

Councilman Murdaugh moved to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on February 18, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor and the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Awards and Recognitions**

c) SCAC Risk Management Awards-Mr. Van Henson from the South Carolina Association of Counties

Mr. Van Henson from the SC Association of Counties presented Mr. George Welch with two awards through Risk Management. The first award was for 2<sup>nd</sup> place overall LAG Time, the quicker the claims can be submitted in, the quicker the employee can get healthy. Colleton County's LAG time was at a .41(less than half a day), SCAC minimum standard is 3 days. The second award presented was the Sustained Excellence Award in Risk Management. This award is given to an organization or individual who has consistently demonstrated a high level of performance and commitment to effective risk management practices over a specified period, often exceeding industry standards

and maintaining a track record of positive results across the various risk areas. This year through the efforts of risk management the County has saved over \$262,000 in premiums. Mr. Van Henson commended Colleton County for its excellent work.

### **Appearances & Public Presentations**

#### **Dr. April Cone-USC Salkehatchie**

Dr. April Cone from USC Salkehatchie presented to Council;

- i. Salkehatchie has been serving the Lowcountry Region for 60 years. Established in 1965 with a campus in Allendale, and in 1979 a campus in Walterboro was established.
- ii. Salkehatchie prides itself on small class sizes, a dedicated faculty, supportive community and seamless transfer options.
- iii. Salkehatchie has served over 5,000 students in the last 10 years, and 281 students from Colleton County in the 2024-2025 school year.
- iv. \$2.27 million dollars in life scholarships has been awarded to Colleton County students over the last 12 years. As well as \$108,000 in Institutional Scholarships in the last 2 years to Colleton County students.
- v. USC Salkehatchie falls under the umbrella of Palmetto College due to it being a regional college. Salkehatchie with the other 4 regions; Columbia, Aiken, Beaufort and Upstate can offer over 30 opportunities for students to earn their bachelor's degree.
- vi. Data indicates that students who complete their degree at a local college are more likely to live and work in that community.
- vii. Salkehatchie offers a STEM Program, Early Childhood Education and research opportunities.
- viii. The research opportunities allow students to participate in research during their Freshman and Sophomore years.
- ix. Salkehatchie served 161 Colleton County students for Dual Enrollment in the 2024-2025 school year. Fifteen Colleton County students earned a college degree(Associates) in May 2024 through the early college program. This does not cost the student.
- x. Leadership Salkehatchie Program is funded by the Southern Carolina Alliance. This program is designed for leaders from Allendale, Jasper, Hampton, Colleton, Bamberg, Beaufort, and Barnwell to enhance their professional skills, gain a deeper understanding of the regions key challenges and opportunities and connect with influential community leaders that are shaping the future of the region.
- xi. The United States Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) has awarded the University of South Carolina Salkehatchie a \$1.9 million grant to support science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education in the Salkehatchie region. This funding will be used to launch a STEM bus that will travel throughout the area, allowing students to explore various STEM concepts, including clean energy

solutions. The program aims to inspire students to pursue STEM careers and contribute to the region's economic growth.

- xii. High Speed Internet and Apple Technology. Free courses including Apple Bits and Bytes, Summer Camps for K-12 Students, AI Courses for individuals and businesses.
- xiii. Senior Citizens 60 or over can take a class at USC Salkehatchie for no charge.
- xiv. USC Salkehatchie has 7 NJCAA Sports Teams.

Dr. April Cone stressed that access to higher education improves communities.

Council thanked Dr. April Cone for presenting.

#### Voter Registration Board

Ms. Queenie Crawford from the Voter Registration Board addressed Council to say thank you to the resources that were provided during the 2024 general elections, especially the new building. Mrs. Crawford introduced the Board Members that were present at the meeting; Janice Blocker, Tim Hamilton, Kimber Santorella, Celia Price and Patricia Grant. Mrs. Crawford also recognized Mrs. Celia Price for her 20 plus years on the Board. Mrs. Crawford also thanked Jon Carpenter, Johnny Stieglitz, Meagan Utsey, Kevin Griffin, Barry McRoy and Bill Addison. Ms. Angela Upchurch the Director gave highlights of the 2024 general election.

Council thanked the Board for presenting and for all their hard work during the election.

#### Dr. Richard Gough, President-Technical College of the Lowcountry

Dr. Richard Gough thanked Council for allowing TCL to come and speak. Dr. Gough recognized Mr. Central Williams as the newest area commissioner for TCL. Dr. Gough introduced Ms. Mary Lee Carn Vice President for Advancement and Workforce. Ms. Mary Lee Carn presented to Council on what TCL has to offer;

- i. Technical College of the Lowcountry is uniquely focused on serving traditional college students as well as working learners. The College provides education and training to advance local workforce development – meeting student needs for higher income and career advancement and simultaneously strengthening the area's economy.
- ii. Since 1968 the Technical College of the Lowcountry has served more than 87,000 students. In the last five years, the college has honored more than 1,500 graduates.
- iii. 80% of TCL workforce programs are free to South Carolina residents. TCL university transfer programs average annual tuition is 36% the cost of the average annual tuition at a four-year university.

- iv. 77% of our students attend part-time. Many TCL students work, attend classes and have families.
- v. 91% of students are Lowcountry residents. Nearly all our students choose to live and work in the Lowcountry after completing their education.
- vi. 95% of our graduates are placed in a job related to their field of study.
- vii. TCL has eight physical locations.
- viii. In 2023, with the leadership of Councilman Taylor and the partnership with the Colleton County Adult Learning Center and the Colleton County School District, TCL was able to open more operations with the goal to better serve the Colleton community.
- ix. From July 1 through December 31, 2024, 276 Colleton County residents applied to TCL. In that time 170 Colleton County residents were enrolled at TCL.
- x. SCWINS provides tuition-free workforce training for South Carolina residents pursuing industry-recognized credentials (IRC) in high-demand fields. It covers up to \$5,000 per year for eligible programs. This program is only available through South Carolina's Technical College System.
- xi. Many Colleton County students must travel to TCL's campuses in Hampton, Beaufort, or Bluffton to access programs and services. This causes barrier that limits participation. TCL's vision is to expand local access to workforce training programs so more residents can train for in-demand careers without leaving their community.

Council thanked both Dr. Gough and Ms. Mary Lee Carn for coming and presenting.

d) Colleton County School District, Superintendent Jessica Williams-CNA Students

Dr. Jenkins the acting interim Assistant Superintendent of academic and student affairs, spoke to Council in place of Superintendent Williams. Dr. Wright was also joining Dr. Jenkins for the presentation. Two students from the CNA program at Colleton County High School spoke to Council on the highlights of the class, what they learned and what they look away from the class. Nurse DeLonge advised that sixteen new CNA students completed the program through Colleton County High School, with a 100% graduation rate. Nurse DeLonge even expressed that some of the graduates are already working in the field.

Council thanked the Colleton County School District for presenting.

**Administrator's Briefing**

Interim County Administrator Meagan Utsey thanked George Welch in the Risk Management Program. She advised that George works hard for the county and for the employees that work within, by doing that he also saves the county money along with the taxpayers. Mrs. Utsey advised that George has won these awards over the past several years.

Mrs. Utsey advised Council that County staff along with the LCOG have been working on a grant application for the drainage issue on River Street. Mrs. Utsey explained the submittal

will be contingent on the Council's willingness to condemn the pond that is causing the drainage problems.

Lastly, Mrs. Utsey advised that Fire-Rescue Emergency Management Division will be closely monitoring the storms on Wednesday and are ready to act should that be required.

### **Public Hearing**

- a) Ordinance 24-O-18, To Authorize the Rezoning of a 22.20 Acre Parcel Located on Green Pond Hwy, Identified as T.M.S. No. 195-00-00-068, from Urban Development – 1 (UD-1) to Industrial (ID).

Councilman Biering opening the floor for the public if there was anyone that would like to speak on the matter. Two gentlemen spoke advising that they live behind the parcel and in the past, there has been concern about possible materials being on location that could cause hazards. Councilman Biering explained that this Ordinance was just to address the rezoning of the parcel so that it is identified as ID instead of UD-1. Any building on the property would have to go through the proper channels to make sure everything is up to code. There were no other comments from the public.

### **Old Business**

- a) 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Ordinance 25-O-01, To Amend Title 2 - Administration and Personnel, Chapter 2.30 - County Council, Section 2.30.060 - Committees, Paragraph F of the Colleton County Code of Ordinances.

Councilman Trippe moved to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Ordinance 25-O-01, To Amend Title 2 - Administration and Personnel, Chapter 2.30 - County Council, Section 2.30.060 - Committees, Paragraph F of the Colleton County Code of Ordinances. The motion was seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. The motion was carried unanimously.

- b) 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 24-O-16, To Establish Chapter 2.77 – Community Center Boards Generally of the Colleton County Code of Laws

Councilman Biering moved to table Ordinance 24-O-16, To Establish Chapter 2.77 – Community Center Boards Generally of the Colleton County Code of Laws. Councilman Taylor seconded the motion and the motion was carried unanimously.

- c) 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 24-O-18, To Authorize the Rezoning of a 22.20 Acre Parcel Located on Green Pond Hwy, Identified as T.M.S. No. 195-00-00-068, from Urban Development – 1 (UD-1) to Industrial (ID).

Councilman Trippe moved to approve 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 24-O-18, To Authorize the Rezoning of a 22.20 Acre Parcel Located on Green Pond Hwy, Identified as T.M.S. No. 195-00-00-068, from Urban Development – 1 (UD-1) to Industrial (ID).

The motion was seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. The motion was carried unanimously.

### **New Business**

- a) Resolution 25-R-14, A Resolution to Establish Priorities for the 2025 Annual CDBG County Needs Assessment

Councilman Trippe moved to approve Resolution 25-R-14, A Resolution to Establish Priorities for the 2025 Annual CDBG County Needs Assessment. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion was carried unanimously.

- b) Resolution 25-R-15, A Resolution to Designate Globe Turnout Gear as the Sole Source for the County's Firefighting Gear and to Authorize the Fire-Rescue Commission to Purchase from the Manufacturer's Designated Distributor for a Period Not to Exceed Five (5) Years.

Councilman Trippe moved to approve Resolution 25-R-15, A Resolution to Designate Globe Turnout Gear as the Sole Source for the County's Firefighting Gear and to Authorize the Fire-Rescue Commission to Purchase from the Manufacturer's Designated Distributor for a Period Not to Exceed Five (5) Years. The motion was seconded by Councilman Frank. The motion was carried unanimously.

- c) Resolution 25-R-16, To Appoint Members to Board Vacancies

Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the following by acclamation was seconded by Councilman Murdaugh; Colleton County Commission of Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Latoya Lynah

### **Items for Information and Public Record**

Councilman Biering advised there were no items for information and public record on the agenda.

### **Public Comments (3 minutes per person/max time 20 min.)**

Jeffery Jones Commander of Post #93 American Legions, spoke on the importance of pushing the Veterans Park for completion and asked for an update.

Felicia Johnson stressed to the Council for streetlights, speed limit signs and caution lights on River St. and she also asked about finding a solution to the water laying in the ditches in the neighborhood. She was thankful that the club on River St was shut down.

Dale Euga spoke on the importance of the Veterans Park being completed.

Jacqueline Jenkins spoke on drainage and flooding issues in the Del Ray Community.

### **Council Time**

Councilman Trippe advised of the new entry signs for Colleton County. The signs will be place at every entry point(18) in Colleton County. Councilman Trippe hopes that it helps the community to take pride, as well as visitors coming in to stay that they may want to stay longer to enjoy our community.

Councilman Taylor addressed several topics; jake brake sign on Highway 21 has been requested, and would need to be addressed with the SCDOT. He reviewed the SCDOT plan for River Street. Councilman Taylor also discussed several projects that are going on in Colleton County, and advised that with projects there are always so many people working behind the scenes to get the projects completed. Hiring event at Wayne Brothers on March 18, 2025, at SC Works Colleton located at 1085 Thunderbolt Drive, the time will be from 10am till 2pm and they will be hiring individuals on the spot.

Councilman Murdaugh addressed the Hendersonville Hwy issue and wanted to make sure it was still on the radar and advised that he was glad to see the gas tax going to work.

Councilman Biering advised the Veterans in attendance that more information would be obtained and someone would reach out to them. Also, advised that Council listens to the community's concerns, and they work to try to reach a resolution on them.

### **Executive Session**

Councilman Taylor made a motion to move to Executive Session to discuss the following: Contractual-TCL, and Green Pond Community Center; Legal-Airport, Sheriff and Dogwood Hills; Economic Development. Councilman Trippe seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Taylor made a motion to exit Executive Session. Councilman Trippe seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Taylor to approve, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, Ordinance 25-O-02, by title only, Authorizing a Lease-Purchase Financing in the Amount of Not Exceeding \$1,500,000 for the Construction of a Fuel Farm at the Lowcountry Regional Airport; The motion was seconded by Councilman Frank, The motion was carried unanimously.

Councilman Biering advised that no other action will be taken.

**Adjournment**

Councilman Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Frank seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

The full County Council meeting is available at the link below:

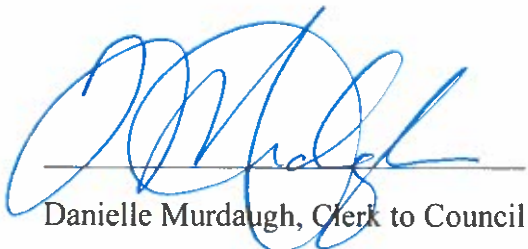
[https://www.youtube.com/live/1IzH-28PnyU?si=i\\_xB0jO\\_hfDnILC2](https://www.youtube.com/live/1IzH-28PnyU?si=i_xB0jO_hfDnILC2)

This 4th day of March 2025.



Scott Biering, Chairman

ATTEST:



Danielle Murdaugh, Clerk to Council