

MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2021
VIRTUAL 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, Art Williams, Gene Whetsell, and Phillip Taylor in attendance.

Others Included: Kevin Griffin, Sean Thorton, Meagan Utsey, Jon Carpenter, Kaela Brinson, Barry McRoy and Johnny Stieglitz.

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

Approval of Minutes

- A. **Regular Meeting Minutes, August 10, 2021** — Councilman Taylor moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on August 10, 2021. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams and the motion carried unanimously.

Awards and Recognitions

- A. **Proclamation for Colleton County Council's Recognition and Memory of Judge Richard B. Wood, Sr. and his Service to Colleton County**— Chairman Murdaugh read the Proclamation aloud. Dr. Flowers moved to approve the motion, and it was seconded by Councilman Whetsell. The motion carried unanimously.
- All of the Councilmen reminisced about their relationships with Judge Wood.

Appearances and Public Presentations

- A. Michelle Gatson- Service Corps of Retired Executives was unable to attend, as a result this was tabled until Council Time. She will be present at the October meeting.

Administrator's Briefing

Mr. Kevin Griffin stated that with the historically low rates right now, the County is looking into refinancing some general obligation bonds that we have from the reconstruction of the Ace Basin Sports Complex, as well as a current fire bond that we can refinance for a shortened term. With the fire bond we are also looking at taking out some additional funds to help finish some fire stations that we were unable to finish due to construction prices, the one in Green Pond being one that got left of the list. Although there will be new funding, there will be no tax increase, as the

millage will not change. He stated that on the GO bond, we are looking at saving roughly \$200,000 over the term of the bond.

Mr. Griffin went on to state that Council will be awarding the contract tonight for the Design Build Services for the Green Pond Community Center. There is a small update on this, they are steadily working on demolishing the current school, and they did run into some more asbestos that was not found during the testing phase as it was masked under some concrete. This is going to take about another 45 days to get it out, but this should not delay the project.

Mr. Griffin also stated that we are awarding the Venture Park Water and Wastewater Improvements after getting the easements needed. The Gadsden Loop Neighborhood Revitalization – Sidewalk Project bidder was non responsive so we will be moving to award this project to the second lowest bidder.

No Comments were made.

Old Business

A. 2nd Reading Ordinance 21-O-09, Authorizing the Acquisition of Certain Heavy Equipment and Vehicles by Colleton County, South Carolina by Lease-Purchase Financing in the Amount of Not Exceeding \$5,500,000; the Execution and Delivery of Certain Instruments, Including a Lease-Purchase Agreement by Colleton County; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.

Dr. Joseph Flowers moved to approve the 2nd reading of Ordinance 21-O-09, Authorizing the Acquisition of Certain Heavy Equipment and Vehicles by Colleton County, South Carolina by Lease-Purchase Financing in the Amount of Not Exceeding \$5,500,000; the Execution and Delivery of Certain Instruments, Including a Lease-Purchase Agreement by Colleton County; and Other Matters Relating Thereto The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor, which was approved unanimously.

B. 2nd Reading Ordinance 21-O-10, To Amend the Colleton County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 3.08 – Purchasing, to Provide for the Adoption of Section 3.08.175 for Protest Procedures Related to Purchasing for State and Federal Grants in Order to Meet Federal Grant Requirements

Councilman Taylor moved to approve the 3rd reading of Ordinance 21-O-10, to Amend the Colleton County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 3.08 – Purchasing, to Provide for the Adoption of Section 3.08.175 for Protest Procedures Related to Purchasing for State and Federal Grants in Order to Meet Federal Grant Requirements. The motion was seconded by Councilman Whetsell. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Murdaugh asked Mr. Griffin if it was a requirement to adopt Section 3.08.175.

Mr. Griffin responded that this is a requirement. They do an audit from both CDBG and Federal Grant requirements, and this is one of the things that came up recently that we had to add in order to receive funds.

Chairman Murdaugh comments on the lack of time this allows for when producing an estimated dollar amount in the event of a Protest.

Councilman Flowers stated he had some concerns.

New Business

- A. **1st Reading Ordinance 21-O-11, By Title Only, To Provide for the Issuance and Sale of Not Exceeding \$ _____ Fire Protection Service General Obligation Bonds of Colleton County, South Carolina; To Prescribe the Purposes for Which the Proceeds Shall Be Expended, Including the Refunding of Fire Protection Service General Obligation Bonds for Debt Service Savings and the Acquisition of Certain Property for Fire Protection Purposes; To Provide for the Payment Thereof; And Other Matters Relating Thereto.**

Dr. Flowers moved to approve the 1st reading of Ordinance 21-O-11, By Title Only, to Provide for the Issuance and Sale of Not Exceeding \$ _____ Fire Protection Service General Obligation Bonds of Colleton County, South Carolina; To Prescribe the Purposes for Which the Proceeds Shall Be Expended, Including the Refunding of Fire Protection Service General Obligation Bonds for Debt Service Savings and the Acquisition of Certain Property for Fire Protection Purposes; To Provide for the Payment Thereof; And Other Matters Relating Thereto. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

- B. **1st Reading Ordinance 21-O-12, By Title Only, Granting an Easement to Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative on a Portion of Property Owned by Colleton County Located at 15583 Bennetts Point Road, County Colleton, SC, and Identified by TMS No. 340-00-00-022.000; Such Easement is to be Used for the Installation, Operation and Maintenance of a Fiber Distribution Hub within Colleton County, SC; to Authorize Execution and Recording of the Easement Documents; and Other Matters Related Thereto.**

Councilman Taylor moved to approve the 1st reading of Ordinance 21-O-12, By Title Only, Granting an Easement to Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative on a Portion of Property Owned by Colleton County Located at 15583 Bennetts Point Road, County Colleton, SC, and Identified by TMS No. 340-00-00-022.000; Such Easement is to be Used for the Installation, Operation and Maintenance of a Fiber Distribution Hub within Colleton County, SC; to Authorize Execution and Recording of the Easement Documents; and Other Matters Related Thereto. The motion was seconded by Councilmen Williams, which was approved unanimously.

- C. **1st Reading Ordinance 21-O-13, By Title Only, To Provide for the Issuance and Sale of Not Exceeding \$_____ General Obligation Refunding Bonds of Colleton County, South Carolina; To Prescribe the Purposes for which the Proceeds Shall Be Expended; To Provide for the Payment Thereof; And Other Matters Relating Thereto.**

Councilman Williams moved to approve the 1st reading of Ordinance 21-O-13, By Title Only, To Provide for the Issuance and Sale of Not Exceeding \$2 Million General Obligation Refunding Bonds of Colleton County, South Carolina; To Prescribe the Purposes for which the Proceeds Shall Be Expended; To Provide for the Payment Thereof; And Other Matters Relating Thereto. The motion was seconded by Councilman Whetsell, which was approved unanimously.

- D. **Resolution 21-R-41, To Officially Name Colleton County Fire-Rescue Station 6, Located at 503 Fire Station Road in Green Pond, “Judge Richard B. Wood Fire Station”**

Councilman Whetsell moved to approve Resolution 21-R-41, to Officially Name Colleton County Fire-Rescue Station 6, Located at 503 Fire Station Road in Green Pond, “Judge Richard B. Wood Fire Station” The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

- E. **Resolution 21-R-42, To Authorize Acceptance and Budgeting of Various Grants for FY 2021-2022.**

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 21-R-42, to Authorize Acceptance and Budgeting of Various Grants for FY 2021-2022. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams, which was approved unanimously.

- F. **Resolution 21-R-43, To Award the Contract for Construction Engineering and Inspections Services related to the Gadsden Loop Neighborhood Revitalization – Sidewalk Project**

Councilmen Williams moved to approve Resolution 21-R-43, to Award the Contract for Construction Engineering and Inspections Services related to the Gadsden Loop Neighborhood Revitalization – Sidewalk Project. The motion was seconded by Councilman Whetsell.

Councilman Taylor asked who the bid was awarded to.

Chairman Murdaugh responded with CDM Smith Inc.

This motion was approved unanimously.

G. Resolution 21-R-44, To Award the Contract for Design Build Services for the Green Pond Community Center

Councilman Whetsell moved to approve Resolution 21-R-44, to Award the Contract for Design Build Services for the Green Pond Community Center. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Williams abstained from voting due to his involvement with the project.

H. Resolution 21-R-45, to Award the Contract for Venture Park Water and Wastewater Improvements

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 21-R-45, to Award the Contract for Venture Park Water and Wastewater Improvements. The motion was seconded by Councilman Whetsell, which was approved unanimously.

I. Resolution 21-R-46, To Appoint Members to Board Vacancies

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 21-R-46, to Appoint Members to Board Vacancies. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams. The motion carried unanimously.

The following appointments were made by acclamation: Dolphus Pinckney and Tamara Berry – Colleton County Commission of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and Lillian Thomas – Colleton County Keep Colleton Beautiful Commission.

Councilman Taylor suggests that more reaching out be done to fill these vacancies within the Commission of Alcohol and Drug Abuse due to the high volume of drug addiction.

No further discussion.

J. Resolution 21-R-47, To Award the Contract for Gadsden Loop Neighborhood Revitalization Sidewalk Project

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 21-R-47, to Award the Contract for Gadsden Loop Neighborhood Revitalization Sidewalk Project. The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams, which was approved unanimously.

Chairmen Murdaugh stated that the contract was awarded to Palmetto Sitework Services, LLC, the second lowest bidder, after KTC Enterprises, Inc. were non-responsive.

K. Discussion of Covid-19 Prevention Measures

Chairman Murdaugh opened discussion with mentions of what surrounding counties are requiring for Covid-19 precautions, specifically, requiring masks for those who interact with the public.

Dr. Flowers stated we should encourage individuals to wear masks and avoid large crowding indoors.

Councilman Whetsell agreed with Dr. Flowers.

Councilman Williams asked if County employees can refuse field services, such as inspections, in the event that a customer approaches an employee unmasked, based on how that employee feels about being around unmasked customers.

Chairman Murdaugh stated that the County cannot instate a County wide mask mandate, but we can certainly instate a requirement for our County Buildings.

Councilman Taylor agreed that we can require masks in County facilities with the exception of employees while they are alone in their individual offices.

Chairman Murdaugh asked if there was a proposal from Council.

Councilman Taylor proposed that the County require masks in County facilities for employees when addressing the public and while they are around other County employees, as well as, requiring masks for the public to enter County Facilities and in the field when County employees are performing responsibilities.

The motion was seconded by Councilman Williams.

Chairman Murdaugh addressed Mr. Kevin Griffin on instating such requirement.

Mr. Kevin Griffin responds by stating that upon a motion we can enact the mask requirement in County facilities effective the following day.

Chairman Murdaugh confirmed that there was a motion and a second and asked if there was any other discussion.

Councilman Williams replies for clarification. Masks will be required to come into County facilities. Will masks be required for employees engaging the public behind a shielded area?

Chairman Murdaugh replied that yes, employees will be required to wear a mask at any time they are working with the public, regardless of a standalone shield.

Dr. Flowers clarified that this is only County facilities and employees and that no other businesses are involved.

All of the Councilmen agreed that this is only for County facilities and employees.

Councilman Taylor asks about employees that have returned to work after their suggested quarantine period.

Councilman Williams responded by referencing the motion made earlier in the discussion, which all employees are required to wear a mask when around other County employees as well as the public.

No further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments

No comments were made.

Council Time

A. Service Corps of Retired Executives

Councilman Taylor stated that Ms. Michelle Gaston, who serves as the chair of the minority outreach program has announced that September 8th is the launch of the SCORE SC Lowcountry minority small business support program; a competitive program that offers grants to Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper County. The application package does include the submission of a business plan. Ms. Buckner of Colleton County High School, who serves as a business educator for the school, was appointed to help prepare the business plans for applicants. They are also asking people who are retired or have banking or business experience to contact Michelle Gaston. They are reaching out to Colleton County to ensure that they have the opportunity to participate in the grant awards. The business has to be 51% or more minority with 25 or less employees. There are also other services for those who do not meet these requirements, and should still reach out to SCORE SC Lowcountry. Applications are available at <https://sclowountry.score.org/Minority-Small-Business-Program>.

Chairman Murdaugh asked if Ms. Gatson is local.

Councilman Taylor stated that she resides in Jasper County, but works in the main office located in Hilton Head, South Carolina.

Executive Session

Councilman Taylor moved to go into executive session to discuss the following: Real Estate - Voter Registration; and Personnel - Recreation. Councilman Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Adjournment

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

The public/media was informed of the location, date, and time of the meeting on Friday, September 3, 2021 in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

This 12th day of October, 2021.


Steven D. Murdaugh, Chairmen

ATTEST:


Kaela Brinson, Clerk to Council

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