

**MINUTES  
COLLETON COUNTY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2014  
6:00 P.M.  
COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, OLD JAIL BUILDING**

Colleton County Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 at 6:00 PM, at the County Council Chambers, Old Jail Building. Steven Murdaugh called the meeting to order with Council Members, Gene Whetsell, Dr. Flowers, in attendance. Phillip Taylor, Evon Robinson Absent.

Others present included: Ruth Mayer, Sean Thornton, Kevin Griffin, Mary Henderson, Eleanor Hodges, Isreal R. Hodges, Sr., Leroy Henderson, Andy Strickland, Tommy Mann, Dale Mann, Donna Lamb, Audrey Brown, Roy Williams, James Rutledge

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

**Appearances & Public Presentations**

None

**Approval of Minutes**

Regular Meeting February 11, 2014

Special Meeting February 19, 2014

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

The motion carried unanimously.

**Awards & Recognitions**

None

**Administrative Briefing**

Mr. Griffin said we would like to welcome everyone to our new and improved council chambers. We are still working a little bit of the AV stuff and a few other things out.

The first item- Winter Storm Damage- You have a document within your packet regarding our preliminary damage assessment. We had a meeting with FEMA February 25<sup>th</sup> and they went through the entire community. Our staff went through the entire storm process with them. What you have before you is the FEMA Categories for storm damage. Category "B" is what we would call the first push; that is clearing the road debris, getting everything back up to work that is our cost as well as any outside contractors and the other debris removal folks. Those costs if we get a Federal Declaration will be 100% reimbursable. Category "A" is what we are currently in now, is

the debris removal stage. That is an estimate as to where we will be when we the debris is finished. Our primary activities of course are right here around Walterboro. The largest part of the damage was in Smoaks, Lodge, Williams, upper part of the county. We have two very large debris removal sites. All of that debris is being stored on temporary debris sites now and will all be chipped and then moved back out. We are keeping that out of our landfill, which is certainly a good thing. The other items you see there would be related to any road repair, the damages from the storm or also damages that the debris removal contractors will do. We are going to file a joint application with both the City of Walterboro and the School District and you have some costs from them as well. We are well past, I think we had to have at least \$136,000 worth of damage at Category "B" in the first push to be eligible for FEMA. Obviously we are well over that. There is another document we received this afternoon it has a chart that talks about, it is primarily a breakdown and then it has the key steps and if you look to the left how ...inaudible... you see a time estimate. I did make contact with the Governor's Office before we came in here this afternoon. The Governor has signed the preliminary damage assessment for the state and that is already in Washington. By their schedule, they are hoping to have a declaration granted by March 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup>. With that we would have our joint field meeting with our county and all the other effected counties. That would actually kick off the time that we would be putting in our reimbursement request for these cost. That is why I didn't have anything on the agenda directly related to the cost. We will do that in April once we get this all square away. If you want any more info, feel free to contact me.

Mr. Griffin said we have just about completed the Breland Building and Old Jail demolition. If you saw the pink marks on the sidewalks around the building, we had some additional monies left over ...inaudible... we will be able to replace some of those things as well.

Mr. Griffin said obviously we have a number of things going on this weekend, I'm sure you are aware of. State Humanities Council, I spoke with Ms. Brightwell this afternoon and they have just about everything booked up Thursday, Friday and Saturday. All their tours, the events on Friday night, it is certainly going fill our hotels, that along with the State Student Council Convention which is at the high school this week.

Mr. Griffin said a few other items for later in the month. Business After Hours will be on March 20<sup>th</sup>, also on March 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> they have the South Carolina Barbeque Association Cook off "Smoke in the Boro" at Coastal Electric Outback Building, then the Historical Society has a fund raiser at Orange Grove Place, which is going to be a brunch and a croquet tournament.

### **Public Hearing**

Ordinance 14-O-01, Authorizing The Execution And Delivery Of Certain Instruments Relating To The Acquisition, Use, And Installation Of Improvements To 604 Wichman Street, Walterboro, South Carolina (The "Farm Market Commercial Kitchen Project"); Approving The Issuance Of a CCEDC Two, Inc. Installment Purchase Revenue Note; Authorizing The Execution And Delivery Of a Public Facilities Purchase And Occupancy

Agreement Among Colleton County, CCEDC Two, Inc., And Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; And Other Matters Relating Thereto.

No comments were made.

Ordinance 14-O-02, Authorizing A Loan From The South Carolina Public Service Authority To Colleton County, South Carolina To Finance The Construction Of An Industrial Building In The Colleton County Commerce Center For The Economic Development Of Colleton County; Authorizing The Execution And Delivery Of An Intergovernmental Loan Agreement Between The South Carolina Public Service Authority And Colleton County And A Promissory Note From Colleton County To The South Carolina Public Service Authority Related Thereto; And Other Matters Relating Thereto.

No comments were made.

### **Old Business**

3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 14-O-01, Authorizing The Execution And Delivery Of Certain Instruments Relating To The Acquisition, Use, And Installation Of Improvements To 604 Wichman Street, Walterboro, South Carolina (The "Farm Market Commercial Kitchen Project"); Approving The Issuance Of a CCEDC Two, Inc. Installment Purchase Revenue Note; Authorizing The Execution And Delivery Of a Public Facilities Purchase And Occupancy Agreement Among Colleton County, CCEDC Two, Inc., And Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; And Other Matters Relating Thereto.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 14-O-02, Authorizing A Loan From The South Carolina Public Service Authority To Colleton County, South Carolina To Finance The Construction Of An Industrial Building In The Colleton County Commerce Center For The Economic Development Of Colleton County; Authorizing The Execution And Delivery Of An Intergovernmental Loan Agreement Between The South Carolina Public Service Authority And Colleton County And A Promissory Note From Colleton County To The South Carolina Public Service Authority Related Thereto; And Other Matters Relating Thereto.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Ordinance 14-O-03, Providing For a Fee in Lieu of Tax Arrangement for Project Dent; Providing for The Allocation of Fees-In-Lieu of Taxes Payable Under the

Agreement for Development for a Joint County Industrial Park with Hampton County; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.

A motion to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> reading was made by Mr. Whetsell and seconded by Dr. Flowers.

The motion carried unanimously.

**New Business**

Resolution 14-R-19, 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. Whetsell and seconded by Dr. Flowers.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 14-R-20, To Approve the Loan of Three Surplused Vehicles to Thunderbolt Career Center for Use in the Mechanic Training Program.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 14-R-21, To Approve a Mutual Aid Agreement Between the Colleton County Sheriff's Office and the Bamberg County Sheriff's Office.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 14-R-22, To Accept the Grant for the Colleton County Summer Feeding Program for 2014.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 14-R-23, To Authorize an Appropriation from E-911 (Fund 141) Fund Balance to Cover Cost of a Dell AppAssure Backup and Recovery System for E-911 Communications.

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

Resolution 14-R-24, To Award the Contract for Professional Planning Services for the Revision of the Colleton Transportation Committee's Transportation Plan.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 14-R-25, To Provide Preliminary Authorization for the Funding of the Colleton County Law Enforcement Center Project; to Declare the Intent of County Council to Reimburse Colleton County For Expenditures Relating to the Colleton County Law Enforcement Center Project from Proceeds of Tax-Exempt Obligations; to Authorize the County Staff to Proceed with Structuring the Financing for the Colleton County Law Enforcement Center Project; and to Provide for Other Matters Relating Thereto.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 14-R-26, Setting Forth the Commitment of Colleton County, South Carolina to Project Dent, Whereby, Under Certain Conditions, Colleton County Will Enter Into a Fee Agreement with Respect to Certain Property and Covenant in Such Fee Agreement to Accept Certain Fees in Lieu of *Ad Valorem* Taxes with Respect to Such Property; and Other Matters Related Thereto.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 14-R-27, To Request The Walterboro City Council Consent To Allow The Colleton County Planning & Development Department To Perform All Required Building Inspections For County Facilities Within The City Of Walterboro.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

## **Council Time**

Dr. Flowers said he wanted to bring an issue to the council and also to the public about Local Government Funding (LGF) from the State of South Carolina. As you know from looking at the information from the Friday report, our LGF is not going to be increased as it should according to the law and the law is being circumvented again this year by the house and senate relative to proper funding of LGF. As you well know it has been under funded for at least 4-5 years and we need to ask the public and also we need to contact our representatives in Columbia and ask them to fund this at the level it is supposed to be funded by law. Because of this lack of LGF that came about by law when this was passed a number of years ago when we had Home Rule passed, this is suppose to help fund a lot of the mandates from the State that are not funded at all, but are passed down to the counties. For the last several years they have had a shortfall of about \$130 million in this. That is a significant amount of money, which amounts to about \$1 million in Colleton County every year, so the taxpayers in this county are having to pick that up. You are paying this to Columbia, but Columbia is suppose to send it back to the county and they are not doing it because they are up there spending the money that they are suppose to be sending back to the counties so that we can give the county taxpayers a tax break if it was send back properly. I want to ask everyone in the audience to call their representatives and ask them to let's get this LGF back up to where it is suppose to be. There is no reason for this. They have plenty of money in Columbia, but they are just short falling the people locally by not funding this government money. It has become a real political football in Columbia and the only way we are going to get this changed is to put pressure on their legislative duties. I would ask the people in the audience here tonight, we appreciate you coming and we are glad you are interested in government and this is something that you need to understand that we could help the county a whole lot more if we had these LGF's funded adequately. Ask them to please fund it fully and it should be fully funded by law and they are circumventing the law. This issue comes up every year.

Another issue we've got is the fact that there is another bill up in Columbia to not allow the county to recoup the percentage charged if someone pays their taxes by credit card. If you pay your taxes by credit card we have to pay 2% to the credit card company, so therefore we get cut 2% on millions of dollars of taxes and that is a big drop. Before now we have been able to add that 2% on to the credit card, by now we won't be able to do that by this proviso that is being put before the legislature. That is another issue that doesn't need to be passed. It further erodes the tax base of the county. I think Mr. Chairman we need to write a letter from County Council and all of us sign it regarding this proviso and also the LGF. I would like to see us do this within the next week.

Mr. Whetsell said is that in the form of a motion?

Dr. Flowers said yes I would make that a motion and Mr. Whetsell seconded the motion.

Mr. Murdaugh said, I am assuming Mr. Administrator we would be asking you to draft a letter for us.

Mr. Griffin said he could make it happen.

Mr. Murdaugh said this LGF issue has gone on for years. Frankly they have just ignored the local elected officials and the law. I frankly don't know how they get away with it, but in any event I certainly think we should write a letter again and ask them about that.

The motion carried unanimously.

**Executive Session**

- a) Personnel
- b) Colleton Medical Center - Security

**Regular Session**

Mr. Murdaugh said all of the items were discussed in executive session.

Dr. Flowers made a motion to approve Resolution 14-R-29, to Approve a Services Agreement between Colleton County, the Colleton County Sheriff's Office and Colleton Medical Center for Hospital Security and to Authorize the Acceptance and Budgeting of Funds in the FY14 Budget from Colleton Medical Center into Fund 120 to Cover Personnel Expenses for Two Sheriff's Deputies and was seconded by Mr. Whetsell.

The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.

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

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Phillip M. Taylor, Sr., Chairman

ATTEST:

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Ruth Mayer, Clerk to Council

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