

MARLBORO COUNTY COUNCIL

MARLBORO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020

10:00 AM

CHAIRMAN

JASON STEEN

VICE CHAIRMAN

CORRIE PLATO

ADMINISTRATOR
CLERK TO COUNCIL
COUNTY ATTORNEY

RON MUNNERLYN
PATRICIA BUNDY
ANDREW McLEOD

COUNCIL:

JASON STEEN,
CHARLES P. MIDGLEY, JR.
DISTRICT 5 - VACANT *
STEVE BLACKMON, AND

WILLIE GLADDEN,
CORRIE H. PLATO,
VERD ODOM,
ANTHONY WOODS

* Absent

Due to the concerns of COVID-19, Councilman Charles P. Midgley, Jr. and Councilwoman Corrie Plato joined the meeting via Zoom, along with Attorney Andrew McLeod. Also joining via Zoom were Ms. Doris Sumpter, Administrative Services Director; Mr. Doug Carabo, Public Services Director; and Ms. Ainsley Moore, Finance Director.

Others Present: Ms. Jackie Hough of the Herald-Advocate.

A copy of the agenda was emailed to Ms. Jacqueline Hough and Mr. Dan McNeil of the Herald Advocate, and posted on the front door of the William P. Wallace, Sr. Administration Building and on the county's website (www.marlborrowcounty.sc.gov).

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, opened the meeting at 10:05 am and stated things were being handled a little differently due to the concerns of COVID-19. He stated a couple of the council members were joining the meeting via Zoom as well as the County Attorney. He stated that the meeting was being live streamed to YouTube and would also be shared to the County's Facebook page.

INVOCATION- Mr. Anthony Woods

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

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Motion made by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., seconded by Mr. Anthony Woods, to approve the agenda as presented. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MARCH 10, 2020 – REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, asked if there were any comments on the minutes or suggested changes or additions. There were no recommended changes.

Motion made by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., seconded by Mr. Anthony Woods, to approve the Regular Council meeting minutes from March 10, 2020 as presented. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

MARCH 20, 2020 – EMERGENCY CALLED MEETING

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, asked if there were any comments on the minutes or suggested changes or additions. There were no recommended changes.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Verd Odom, to approve the March 20, 2020 Emergency Called meeting minutes from March 20, 2020 as presented. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

NO OLD BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCE # 795 – AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS FOR MARLBORO COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2020 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021 – FIRST READING (TITLE ONLY)

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, recognized Mr. Ron Munneryn, County Administrator, to make comments on this Ordinance.

Mr. Munneryn stated staff was working on drafting two different budgets for consideration by Council. He stated the first drafted budget would be the typical type budget and would include an increase for retirement costs and health insurance. He stated staff felt that cuts could be made within departments to balance the budget with no major concerns. He stated the most important issue for staff at this time was estimating revenue for the county and what the state will be providing to the County.

Mr. Munneryn stated he felt the other budget being drafted was fair but included drastic cuts. He reminded Council of how things were back in 2008 or 2009 when the state reduced the amount of funds that were paid to the County. He stated the reduced revenue caused drastic measures which included furloughs of employees. He stated he did not recommend

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furloughs of employees and suggested Council consider using funds from reserves if needed in order to avoid furloughing employees. He stated the two budgets would be drafted with the information provided and the drafted budgets would be shared with members of Council at the next meeting.

Chairman Steen asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to approve the first reading in title only of Ordinance # 795 – an Ordinance to Adopt the Annual Budget and to Make Appropriations for Marlboro County for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2020 and Ending June 30, 2021. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE # 796 – AN ORDINANCE TO APPROVE THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR MARLBORO COUNTY FOR THE PERIOD OF FY 2021-2025 – FIRST READING (TITLE ONLY)

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, recognized Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, to make comments on this Ordinance.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated this document was the companion Ordinance to the budget Ordinance which lists proposed capital improvement plans for the purchase of equipment, vehicles, etc. for all departments. He stated more information would be provided to members of Council at the next meeting.

Chairman Steen asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Motion made by Mr. Verd Odom, seconded by Mr. Willie Gladden, to approve the first reading in title only of Ordinance # 796 – an Ordinance to Approve the Capital Improvement Plan for Marlboro County for the Period of FY 2021-2025. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AMENDED AND RESTATED DECLARATION OF COVENANTS, CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR THE I-95 GATEWAY INDUSTRIAL PARK AND ADJACENT COMMERCIAL PROPERTY, DILLON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, recognized Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, to make comments on this item.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the document being considered for approval pertained to the I-95 Gateway Tri-County Industrial Park agreement with Harbor Freight. He stated Dillon County has zoning and other requirements that the park must be in compliance with and these amended covenants, conditions and restrictions would accomplish compliance. Mr. Munnerlyn suggested approval.

Chairman Steen asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

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Motion made by Mr. Steve Blackmon, seconded by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., to approve the Amended and Restated Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for the I-95 Gateway Industrial Park and Adjacent Commercial Property, Dillon, South Carolina. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION REGARDING BROWN GOOD FEES FOR CITY OF BENNETTSVILLE RESIDENTS

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, recognized Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, to make comments on this item.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that last year Council approved applying a \$10 fee to the tax bills for all residents in the City of Bennettsville for solid waste collection. He reminded Council members this was done because the City of Bennettsville had ceased picking up residents' brown goods from the sides of the roads which had been their practice for years. Mr. Munnerlyn stated because the City of Bennettsville was no longer picking up these brown goods, the residents of the City of Bennettsville were forced to take their brown goods to the landfill and were required to pay a fee. He stated Council felt a \$10 fee on their tax bills would be sufficient in allowing the County to accept those items at the landfill for disposal. He stated the City of Bennettsville has recently passed an Ordinance to allow their staff to start picking up brown goods again from the roadsides and the City of Bennettsville staff has asked the County staff to consider paying a portion of the funds received from the \$10 fee implemented on the City of Bennettsville residents, to the City of Bennettsville to help with the costs of their resuming this service. Mr. Munnerlyn stated he felt that the County may have spent about half of the funds received from the city residents and asked members of Council to consider this request. He stated he felt it was a fair request.

Chairman Steen stated he felt it would be fair to pay the balance of the funds remaining from the \$10 fee collected from City of Bennettsville residents to the City of Bennettsville since they will be responsible for the pick-up and disposal of their residents' brown goods.

Mr. Steve Blackmon stated he had no problem with this but stated it needed to be fair for both sides and agreed with staff's recommendation.

Mr. Willie Gladden stated if staff feels it is fair and both the County and City could work together to get the matter worked out to a favorable solution, he would be in agreement. He stated it was nice to see the County and City staff working together to resolve the issue.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that the County currently has a much better relationship with the City and stated this could have been a problem a few months ago.

Chairman Steen asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Motion made by Mr. Willie Gladden, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to allow staff to determine the amount of fees that remain available from the collection of the \$10 solid waste collection fees that have been collected from the City of Bennettsville residents and to pay that amount to the City of Bennettsville in exchange for the City

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of Bennettsville assuming the responsibility of picking up and disposing of their residents' brown goods. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

CONSIDERATION OF REAPPOINTMENT OF MS. RENA MCLAIN TO SERVE ON PEE DEE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD FOR AN ADDITIONAL THREE-YEAR TERM

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, recognized Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, to make comments on this item.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that Ms. Rena McLain has apparently served well on the Pee Dee Workforce Development Board and the Board has provided a letter requesting that her term be extended for an additional three year term. He stated Council has been asked to approve this extension of term.

Chairman Steen asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to reappoint Ms. Rena McLain to serve on the Pee Dee Workforce Development Board for an additional three-year term. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

There were no other recommended appointments.

REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT – MS. AINSLEY MOORE

Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, stated that with all the changes for the meeting the finance report was not available for Council's review and apologized. He stated that he would have Ms. Moore provide the reports to them by email. He stated everything was on target and the County had not experienced any "big hits" so far with expenses relating to the virus.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – MR. RON MUNNERLYN, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, recognized Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, for his report.

EMPLOYEE SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. Munnerlyn recognized the following employees who have five or more years of service to Marlboro County through the month of March: Martha McQuage (13 years); Luther Brown (18 years); Don Driggers (9 years); and Patricia Bundy (7 years).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Arauco Closing

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the sudden announcement regarding the closure of the Arauco MDF plant here and the loss of up to 130 jobs came as a shock to staff as well as the employees that worked there. He stated there has been no formal communication from the company and staff learned of it from an employee that worked at the plant through one of our council persons.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated he met with the plant manager of the site to offer any assistance that the County might be able to provide with outplacement of employees and marketing of the building and site if they chose to sell it. At this time the plant manager could not offer many details.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the County has had a huge success with the Arris plant in Clio which continued to grow towards a goal of 250 employees. He stated all indications are that the Arauco closing was purely a business decision based on the closure of other MDF plants owned by the company; however, it has a significant impact on Marlboro County's small population.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Wind Damage Claim - Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Wallace Recreation area received wind damage as a result of the storm on April 13th. He reported the claim had been filed with the Insurance Reserve Fund and the adjuster had visited and reviewed the damage.

COVID-19 Operational Update – Mr. Munnerlyn stated all public access areas have had clear plastic barriers installed to separate the public from staff. He stated access to the interior offices of the Courthouse was necessary since there was no drive-through type set-up. He stated permanent barriers would be installed in the near future and other options reviewed to limit close contact between staff and citizens.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated some offices such as the Clerk of Court and Probate Judge were limiting public access on a case by case basis and utilizing appointments.

He stated all County employees have been directed to maintain a separation of 6 feet or more. He stated employees have been advised that when maintaining a separation of 6 feet or more was not possible on a short term basis, they should wear masks which the County has provided. Mr. Munnerlyn reported that to ensure social distancing, personnel throughout the County was working on a rotating basis (one week in office and one week out) to lessen exposure. He stated that the employees working on a rotating basis have laptop computers and are able to do work at home.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated all of these measures would likely stay in place at least until the Governor removes the state of emergency executive order.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that staff was reviewing the situation on a weekly basis with regards to Recreation, the Museums or other public programs. He stated the state has decided that

it's unsafe for children to be in classrooms together so likewise staff feels it prudent to not open recreation or the museums at this time.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Library Board has developed a plan to re-open the Library in stages. He stated the Librarian, Ms. Grooms, had discussed their plan with him and he expressed his concern about moving too fast. He reminded members of Council that the Library Board was appointed by County Council, but by law were not subject to Council or the Administrator's direction with some exceptions.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated he would be happy to answer any questions members of Council may have.

Mr. Anthony Woods asked if the County had heard anything from AT&T or Verizon about any new towers being constructed in the area. He stated he felt it would be helpful to have a list of available areas where wi-fi internet service may be available for the public. Mr. Munnerlyn responded that he was not aware of any new towers being constructed in the county but understood that the School District had buses throughout the county that were equipped with wi-fi internet services to assist the children with their school work. He agreed it would be a good idea to identify the locations that had wi-fi internet service available to the public so that it could be shared. He stated he understood that Verizon had added additional service to their customer's plans as a courtesy.

Chairman Steen suggested that the rural fire stations could possibly share their router service for the public to access wi-fi internet connections. He stated this was one of the rural initiatives that was discussed in Council's strategic planning and events like this help folks realize just how important internet service is to everyone and the need for better service in our rural areas.

RECOGNITION OF CITIZEN'S REQUEST BEFORE COUNCIL

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, stated that no citizens had requested to address Council.

RECOGNITION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Anthony Woods – stated that First Citizens Bank in Clio closed on April 21st. He stated he had hoped that they would delay the closing due to the pandemic but they stood firm and closed as announced. He stated the closing makes it tough for the citizens in Clio. He stated folks are trying to stay home but now they have to travel all the way to Bennettsville just to get a check cashed or deposited. He stated he hoped this was not the new normal.

Ms. Corrie Plato – asked everyone to stay safe and be careful during these times.

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr. – encouraged everyone to be safe. He had no other comments.

Mr. Willie Gladden – mentioned the library's plan to consider re-opening and stated he felt it was too early. He stated he hoped they would take a close look at this. He stated the library has many folks coming in to do many different things.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated he had talked with the Librarian and expressed that he felt it was too early and he did not think the Board had made a decision yet. He stated they had a good plan but just felt it was too premature at this time. He stated the Board had not announced a date as to when the plan would be implemented and stated he would keep members of Council updated on what the Library Board decides.

Mr. Verd Odom – stated that some residents in the McColl area had called him about some potholes on roads that were pretty bad. He stated he made a call to Mr. Tim McGee at the SC Department of Transportation and the potholes were taken care of real quick. He stated he had a great relationship with the local DOT folks and he appreciated their efforts in taking care of issues when they were called upon.

Mr. Odom stated the Governor's office had postponed the local elections which were scheduled for May 5th and these elections would now be held on May 26. He stated there was a possibility that they may be postponed again beyond the May 26th date. He obtained this information from the local Board of Elections office.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that was very unfortunate for County Council. He recommended the Council Chairman write a letter to the Governor regarding the special election for County Council District 5. He stated Mr. Stroman has no opposition and residents in District 5 currently have no representation. He stated he felt that Mr. Stroman should be able to take the seat under the current situation. Chairman Steen agreed and asked staff to draft the letter and he would sign it.

Mr. Steve Blackmon – encouraged everyone to stay safe and asked folks to take their time on opening things back up too early. He suggested everyone take a close look before taking action too early. He stated you would hate to open back up and find that you did it to soon only to have to close again. He stated the virus was more serious than some folks realize. He stated folks needed to be aware and follow the recommendations made by the CDC.

Mr. Jason Steen – mentioned the Library's plans to consider reopening. He asked that they really look close at this before jumping ahead too soon. He stated he understood that folks with children want to get back into a routine and need things to do. He stated he had a young child and she doesn't understand why she can't play with her friends. He encouraged everyone to use caution and follow the Governor's order and the CDC recommendations.

Mr. Steen mentioned the straight line winds which Wallace sustained a couple of weeks ago. He stated a lot of folks were without power for a couple of days and some were out for about five days. He thanked everyone and mentioned members of the local Fire Department that worked really hard. He stated everyone pulled together to get things done. He mentioned the Marlboro Electric Cooperative linemen and stated they continued to work tirelessly until power was restored to all residents. He stated they did a great job and he appreciated their help.

Chairman Steen encouraged everyone to stay safe and be patient. He stated we certainly did not want to reopen things too early and then have to start all of this over again. He stated folks needed to continue moving forward.

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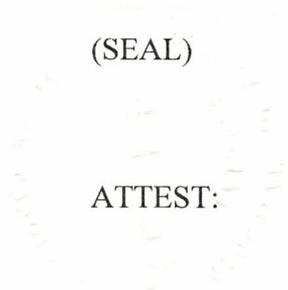
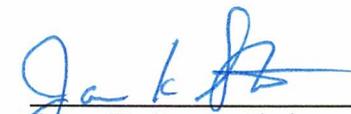
NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no non-agenda items.

ADJOURN

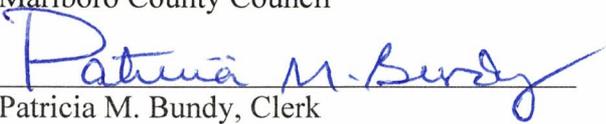
Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, asked if there were any other comments or business. There being none, he adjourned the meeting at 10:45 am.

(SEAL)

Jason K. Steen, Chairman
Marlboro County Council

ATTEST:



Patricia M. Bundy, Clerk
Marlboro County Council

Adopted: May 19, 2020