

MARLBORO COUNTY COUNCIL
MARLBORO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BUILDING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2021

6:00 PM

CHAIRMAN

JASON STEEN

VICE CHAIR
ADMINISTRATOR
CLERK TO COUNCIL
COUNTY ATTORNEY

CORRIE PLATO
RON MUNNERLYN
PATRICIA BUNDY
ANDREW MCLEOD

COUNCIL:
JASON STEEN
CHARLES P. MIDGLEY, JR.
KENNETH STROMAN
STEVE BLACKMON, AND

DR. DAMIEN JOHNSON
CORRIE H. PLATO
VERD ODOM
ANTHONY WOODS

- Absent

Others Present: Ms. Doris Sumpter, Administrative Services Director; Mr. Wes Park, Finance Director; and 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.marlbocounty.sc.gov).

INVOCATION – Mr. Anthony Woods

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION – DISCUSSION OF PERSONNEL MATTERS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (PURSUANT TO SC CODE SECTION 30-4-70)

July 13, 2021 County Council Meeting

Motion made at 6:02 pm by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters and economic development projects, pursuant to SC Code Section 30-4-70. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

Motion made at 7:13 pm by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., to leave executive session and return to open session. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

Chairman Steen advised that no votes had been taken and no decisions were made during the executive session.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

JUNE 8, 2021 – 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. Anthony Woods, seconded by Dr. Damien Johnson, to approve the regular council meeting minutes of June 8, 2021 as presented. Vote in favor: Mr. Jason Steen, Dr. Damien Johnson, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, Mr. Verd Odom, Mr. Steve Blackmon, and Mr. Anthony Woods. Abstained: Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr. and Ms. Corrie Plato (they were not present at the June 8th meeting). Vote: 6/0/2. Motion carried.

JUNE 21, 2021 – “CALLED” 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. Verd Odom, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, to approve the “called” council meeting minutes of June 21, 2021 as presented. Vote in favor: Mr. Jason Steen, Dr. Damien Johnson, Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Ms. Corrie Plato, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, Mr. Verd Odom, and Mr. Steve Blackmon. Abstained: Mr. Anthony Woods (not present at the June 21st meeting). Vote: 7/0/1. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

ORDINANCE # 818 – AN ORDINANCE TO OUTLINE CONDITIONS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS AND TO ESTABLISH THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE – SECOND READING

July 13, 2021 County Council Meeting

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated this Ordinance is in line with comments made at the first reading. He stated staff would be meeting with the Planning Commission to make sure all privacy setbacks and requirements are included in the ordinance for our citizens. He stated more information would be available at third reading.

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

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, to approve second reading of Ordinance # 818 – an Ordinance to Outline Conditions for Renewable Energy Systems and to Establish the Effective Date of this Ordinance. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

OPENING & ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS

MARLBORO COUNTY SPECULATIVE INDUSTRIAL BUILDING

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the County has agreed to build a speculative industrial building and the SC Department of Commerce has provided a grant for most of the funding. He stated staff prepared a packet requesting proposals for the construction of the building. He stated it was not all based on costs, but the proposals were to include specifications as to the building would be constructed. He stated the cost is always considered.

Mr. Munnerlyn reminded members of Council that they had approved the Marlboro County Economic Development Partnership's Infrastructure Committee to review and rate the proposals. He stated the members of the committee were approved by Council and consisted of representatives from the electric companies, water utility companies, County Transportation Committee, Railroad, and the city. He stated the committee reviewed all proposals with Cohn Construction Services rating the highest and providing the lowest price. He stated the committee considered all aspects of the project.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the budget for the speculative industrial building is \$2.3 million but due to the pandemic, all material costs have increased. He stated the total cost provided for the construction of the building is \$2.6 million which is about \$230,000 higher than the than staff anticipated. He stated the committee members were pleased that the increase in cost was no higher than that amount. He stated a 4th concrete wall was added on as requested by the SC Department of Commerce with a verbal commitment to cover that cost. He stated without that

add-on, the costs overestimate of a little more than \$230,000 would be covered by Marlboro County Economic Development restricted funds.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated he is pleased to report that he had discussed the overage amount with his contact at the SC Department of Commerce, and they have agreed to cover the additional costs of the project as well as the additional costs of the 4th concrete wall. He stated there would not be any additional costs to the County. He stated the County has agreed to contribute \$500,000 from its Economic Development restricted funds and Marlboro Electric Cooperative has contributed \$150,000 in RDA funds.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff is excited about this project and asked that council consider approving the recommendation of the Partnership's Infrastructure Committee to accept the proposal from Cohn Construction, as well as approve first reading of an Ordinance authorizing the County attorney to prepare and negotiate a contract for the construction of the building. He stated the ordinance would require three readings and suggested that the Council consider amending the agenda to add first reading of the Ordinance in title only for consideration tonight.

Motion made by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., seconded by Mr. Anthony Woods, to accept the proposal from Cohn Construction Services for the construction of the speculative industrial building in the amount of \$2,772,483. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Ms. Corrie Plato, to amend the agenda to add a new item of business: Ordinance # 819 – an Ordinance to Approve the Negotiation of a Contract Between Marlboro County and Cohn Construction Services for the Construction of a Speculative Industrial Building to be Located in the Marlboro County Industrial Park – First Reading (title only). Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE # 819 – AN ORDINANCE TO APPROVE THE NEGOTIATION OF A CONTRACT BETWEEN MARLBORO COUNTY AND COHN CONSTRUCTION SERVICES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SPECULATIVE INDUSTRIAL BUILDING TO BE LOCATED IN THE MARLBORO COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARK – FIRST READING (TITLE ONLY)

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, to approve first reading in title only of Ordinance # 819 – an Ordinance to Approve the Negotiation of a Contract Between Marlboro County and Cohn Construction Services for the Construction of a Speculative Industrial Building to be Located in the Marlboro County Industrial Park. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

There were no appointments to Boards and Commissions.

REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT – MR. WES PARK

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, recognized Mr. Wes Park, Finance Director, for his report.

Mr. Wes Park, Finance Director, stated the general fund revenues for the twelve months ending June 30th, 2021 total \$12,052,862. He stated general fund expenditures through June 30th, 2021 total \$11,171,330 of a \$12,127,683 budget or 92.11 % of the budget year to date. Mr. Park stated there would many adjustments to close out the books for the end of the year.

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

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

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

EMPLOYEE SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

The following employees were recognized with five or more years of service to Marlboro County through the month of June: Harvey Patterson (6 years), Sharonica Henegan (14 years); and Rob Stanton (23 years).

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. **Lunch provided at the Community Kitchen** – Mr. Munnerlyn stated Marlboro County will provide lunch at the Community Kitchen tomorrow. He stated Sheriff Lemon and his department will be leading the group. The plates will be provided for take-out only.
2. **SCAC Annual Conference** – Mr. Munnerlyn stated the SC Association of Counties’ Annual Conference is scheduled for August 1st – 3rd, 2021 and Institute of Government classes will be available on July 30th – August 1st, 2021.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Recreation Project RFP- Mr. Munnerlyn stated the MCEDP Image Committee has posted the Recreation Project RFP on the SC Business Opportunities website, as well as the County’s website and the proposals are due by July 28, 2021.

Summer Basketball League – Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff has seen good participation in the summer basketball league now on going at the Prince Center in Blenheim. He stated there was a change this year with the addition of a draft to choose players and folks are always concerned about change. He stated based on the 43-40 score last night in the 12U group, he felt this change has resulted in a good mix of players on each team with no dominant team. He stated adult league games will start next week.

Tax Reassessment Notices – Mr. Munnerlyn provided a brief presentation regarding the notices mailed out recently and the process for adjusting millage once new valuation figures are determined.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that residents received their notices about the reassessment. He stated the notices look horrible and he felt the company that prepared the notices did a poor job. He stated the notices look very much like bills, but they were not bills. He stated the notices reflect the value of the property but does not reflect how the values changed – whether the value increased or decreased. He stated the notices also did not reflect last year's assessed value.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff spent two hours drafting the explanation on the back and no one can read it due to the print being so small. Mr. Munnerlyn stated he wanted to take a minute and explain the process so that folks could understand.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated every four to five years, state law requires that the County look at the value of properties in the County and adjust the values up or down. He stated if a resident builds a building or sells property, the value is clear. He stated if a resident adds a pool, the value of the property would clearly increase. He stated properties that have no change will go up some too based on a Kelly's Blue book type system. He stated staff has found that the values on properties in our County, on average, are 30% lower than what the book indicates.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated with the reassessment, the increase will be 8%. He stated some folks feel their property is valued much lower than what they think it is worth.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated folks should ask themselves if they could sell their home for the amount listed on the tax value. He stated most folks think because their house value went up that their taxes will go up. Mr. Munnerlyn stated taxes are a percentage of the value of your property but by law the County, the School Board, and or any other entity levying taxes must determine what the total value of the properties in the County are and then determine the amount of how that total value changed from the year before. He stated if the property was valued at \$10,000 last year and it is valued at \$20,000 this year, taxes will be twice as much.

Mr. Munnerlyn suggested folks should not be upset about their tax value increasing, but with the tax millage. He stated the problem staff has had is Chairman Steen may own the same type of house that I have but they may have different values. He stated everything should be valued the same way and treated equally. He stated the goal was to get everything taxed in the same manner so that everyone will be treated the same. He stated taxes will be adjusted. The County or the school cannot raise taxes based on this reassessment. He stated if we need to raise taxes, we will do that. He stated if the value goes up, those taxes will bring in more money per tax mil. Mr. Munnerlyn stated right now one tax mil brings in \$60,000 for the County and brings in about \$45,000 for the schools. He stated in Horry County, a tax mil would bring in over \$2 million.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated he wanted to explain this tax assessment process. He stated County Council has pushed for transparency.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BORO

Mr. Munnerlyn stated as discussed in executive session, the County has a prospect for the BORO site in Bennettsville. He stated staff is working to develop the details for the project and is meeting with the prospect this week.

Delta site

Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff is working on estimates for demolition of the 275,000 square foot center building at Delta. He stated at the same time, an asbestos assessment is being conducted for the complex, as required prior to demolition of the building. He stated once staff has the estimate, staff will move forward with the CDBG grant to cover the cost of demolition.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated once the CDBG grant is processed, staff will also begin cleanup of the outer perimeter of the site. He stated there is a good bit of landscaping that can be saved, but also a great deal of vegetation that will have to be cut. He stated staff's intent is to create a perimeter road around the outer fence line.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff will be hiring a consultant to develop a plan for the site including conceptual drawings and a rendering to use in marketing the location. He stated there is a huge demand for existing buildings and warehouse space. He stated staff has been told by regional and state economic development experts that the space will be very marketable – with a good chance of bringing jobs to the county.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated this has been a long process hampered mainly by the many steps involved in dealing with environmental issues. He stated often nothing is good enough or fast enough for some folks. He stated this is a very complicated project with many, many environmental issues. He reminded Council that if the County would not have stepped up to gain control, the property there would be literally no chance of cleanup of the site as the former owners disappeared, leaving a large problem. He stated the good news is, 5 years into what staff thought was a 2-year project, we are close to real action.

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

RECOGNITION OF CITIZEN'S REQUEST BEFORE COUNCIL

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, stated no citizens had signed up to address Council.

RECOGNITION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Verd Odom – stated there was not a lot going on right now. He stated many folks are going out of town for vacations and encouraged everyone to have someone check on their homes when they are out of town.

Mr. Odom stated the weather was getting hot and reminded everyone to check on neighbors and the elderly folks.

Mr. Steve Blackmon – no comments.

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr. – no comments.

Dr. Damien Johnson – no comments.

Mr. Kenneth Stroman – no comments.

Ms. Corrie Plato – no comments.

Mr. Anthony Woods – stated everything was going well in Clio. He stated he hoped that everyone had a good 4th of July.

Mr. Woods stated that school would be starting soon.

Mr. Jason Steen – no comments.

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 7:34 pm.

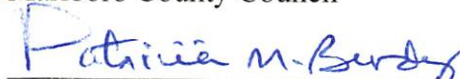
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ATTEST:

Adopted: August 10, 2021



Jason K. Steen, Chairman
Marlboro County Council



Patricia M. Bundy, Clerk
Marlboro County Council