

MARLBORO COUNTY COUNCIL

MARLBORO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2020

6:00 PM

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, Councilwoman Corrie Plato and County Attorney Andrew McLeod joined the meeting via Zoom.

Others Present: Mr. Doug Carabo, Public Services Director; Ms. Doris Sumpter, Administrative Services Director; Ms. Jackie Hough, of the Herald-Advocate; and Mr. Kenneth Stroman, upcoming District 5 Representative pending election held today (observing only and taking no action).

A copy of the agenda was emailed to Ms. Jacqueline Hough and Mr. Dan McNiel 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).

INVOCATION- Mr. Anthony Woods

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

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

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June 23, 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. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Willie Gladden, to approve the Regular Council meeting minutes from June 23, 2020 as presented. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

ORDINANCE # 789 – AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH MARLBORO COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES – THIRD READING

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that Ms. Doris Sumpter, Director of Administrative Services, would provide brief comments on the updates made to the Personnel Policies and Procedures.

Ms. Sumpter stated she and other staff had worked hard over the past several months revising the Personnel Policies and Procedures manual. She stated other counties' handbooks had been reviewed, policies and procedures were discussed with other counties and staff had made sure that everything in the handbook complied with state and federal laws. She stated the proposed manual had also been reviewed by the County's labor attorney.

Ms. Sumpter stated the manual being proposed had most of the same topics that were discussed in prior manuals but with some added detail and changes.

Ms. Sumpter stated there were a few significant changes made to the handbook from previous handbooks, ordinances, resolutions and policies previously adopted by Council and she noted them as follows:

Annual and Sick Leave Accrual Carry Over Balance – Ms. Sumpter stated the proposed policy would reduce annual leave accrual carry over from 500 hours per year to 360 hours (45 days) per year and reduce sick leave accrual carry over from 1350 hours per year to 960 hours (120 days). She stated these limits were based on amounts used by the state and other counties and municipalities. She stated there were a few long-time existing employees that were over this limit currently and staff proposes to allow these employees until December 31, 2025 to use their excess leave to become in compliance with the new limits. She stated these changes could be found on pages 15 and 18 of the updated manual.

Sick Leave Bank – Ms. Sumpter stated the proposed policy would increase the amount of leave an employee may request from the sick leave bank. She stated the sick leave bank allows employees to donate their unused sick leave to a pool of leave from which employees may draw should they exhaust their leave due to a serious illness. Ms. Sumpter stated previously employees could only donate up to three days but the proposed policy would

allow employees to donate up to five days of sick leave and would also allow any employee leaving the County or retiring to donate up to five days. She stated an employee would then be allowed to initially request up to 20 days of sick leave from the bank and if an employee determines that additional days are needed, he/she may request an additional 40 days. She stated all requests would be reviewed by an employee committee and Human Resources. She stated these changes could be found on page 20 of the updated manual.

Rehire of Retiring Employees- Ms. Sumpter stated the current policy allows retiring employees to return to work for only five additional years. She stated the proposed policy eliminates that restriction which was originally put in place to be in line the state's Teri program but is no longer necessary. She stated the proposed policy makes it clear that an employee cannot automatically expect to return to work if they retire but the employee must advise management of their intent to retire and at that time future employment could be discussed and terms negotiated. She stated these changes could be found on page 52 of the updated manual.

Retirees Insurance – Ms. Sumpter stated the County's current policy states that an employee with 30 years of service to Marlboro County may continue their insurance coverage for themselves and spouse/dependents and pay only the employee portion of the cost until the age of 65 at which time the employee would no longer be entitled to coverage through the County.

Ms. Sumpter stated in the new policy, in order for employees to be eligible for continued insurance coverage for themselves and spouse/dependents, the employee must be eligible to retire from Marlboro County according to the state retirement system. She stated if employees are eligible to retire and have 10-24 years of service in the retirement system, of which 10 consecutive years are with the County, the employee may keep coverage but must pay both the county portion and the employee portion of the cost.

Ms. Sumpter stated employees eligible to retire with 25+ years in the retirement system and with at least 10 consecutive years at the county, would be required to pay only the employee portion of the cost for continued coverage for themselves and spouse/dependents.

Ms. Sumpter stated regardless of the criteria above, all insurance coverage would end for retirees at the age of 65.

Ms. Sumpter stated the proposed policy was more in line with the State of South Carolina rules.

Ms. Sumpter stated there were a few retirees currently receiving health insurance benefits in conflict with the current and proposed policy. She stated as staff works to ensure compliance, staff recommends that these retirees be allowed to remain on the County insurance until January 1, 2022 which would allow them time to secure other insurance coverage. Ms. Sumpter stated these changes could be found on pages 10 and 11 of the updated manual.

Mr. Anthony Woods mentioned retirees insurance and asked what the premium costs of the employee and employer portion might be. Ms. Sumpter stated that she could not tell him

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because it would depend on what type coverage would be retained by the retiring employee (i.e., employee only, employee and spouse, or employee, spouse and dependents).

Chairman Steen asked what the retiring employee would be required to pay if they retired after 25 years versus 10 years. Mr. Munnerlyn stated if an employee has 25 years in with the state retirement system with at least 10 consecutive years with the County, the employee would be allowed to keep coverage by only paying the employee portion of the coverage which would be determined at the time of his/her retirement.

Chairman Steen asked staff to confirm his understanding that when retired employees turn the age of 65, the insurance would end. Mr. Munnerlyn confirmed that to be correct and stated the policy also stated if an employee becomes disabled and begins receiving disability benefits with insurance, they would no longer be eligible to remain on the County's insurance plan.

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

Motion made by Mr. Verd Odom, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to approve the third reading of Ordinance # 789 – an Ordinance to Establish Marlboro County Personnel Policies and Procedures. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE # 797 – AN ORDINANCE TO POSTPONE THE IMPLEMENTATION REVISED VALUES RESULTING FROM THE EQUALIZATION PROGRAM (REASSESSMENT) – THIRD READING

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated this was the final reading needed for the Ordinance to postpone the reassessment for one additional year. He stated the additional year would assist the Tax Assessor and his staff since new software has been purchased, to make the assessment process more accurate and efficient.

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

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., to approve third reading of Ordinance # 797 – An Ordinance to Postpone the Implementation Revised Values Resulting from the Equalization Program (Reassessment). Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

EMERGENCY ORDINANCE # 798 – AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO DECLARE A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN MARLBORO COUNTY AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Emergency Ordinance for consideration simply updates the last Emergency Ordinance which expired after the 61st day with no modifications. He stated this was recommended and if approved, would remain effective for an additional 60 day period. He stated staff has not yet needed to enforce the authority provided in the Emergency Ordinance but he felt that it was a good idea to keep it updated and in force should the need arise.

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

Motion made by Mr. Steve Blackmon, seconded by Mr. Willie Gladden, to approve Emergency Ordinance # 798 – an Emergency Ordinance to Declare a State of Emergency in Marlboro County and Other Matters Related Thereto. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

There were no recommended appointments to boards or commissions.

REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT

Mr. Ron Munnerlyn stated that staff does not typically provide a Finance Report for the month of June since it is the last month of the fiscal year. Mr. Munnerlyn stated Ms. Ainsley Moore was resigning and had decided to work from home which would also allow her to spend more time with her two small children. He stated he and the entire county staff wished her well. He encouraged everyone to call Ms. Moore and speak with her prior to her leaving and stated her last day was scheduled for Friday, July 17th.

Mr. Munnerlyn announced that Mr. Wes Park would be assisting the County with Finance and stated he began his duties today to make sure the transition was handled smoothly.

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

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 (5 years); Sharonica Henegan (13 years); and Rob Stanton (22 years).

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. **SC Association of Counties' Annual Conference and Institute of Government –**
The SC Association of Counties' Annual Conference in Hilton Head is scheduled for

August 2-3, 2020 with the Institute of Government classes also being made available from August 1-2, 2020. Mr. Munnerlyn asked any Council members that wished to attend to let Ms. Bundy know so that she could assist them with reservations and conference registrations. He stated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Association would have strict social distancing measures, and offer both in-person and virtual learning opportunities during the conference as well as live-streaming of the General Session. He also announced the exhibit hall, Sunday evening reception, and banquet would not take place this year and the 2020 Awards Competition would not be held at the time of the conference but was scheduled for August 26, 2020 in Columbia.

2. **Community Meeting with Local Law Enforcement** – Congressman Tom Rice scheduled an informal community meeting with the Marlboro County Sheriff's Department and others for Wednesday, July 15th from 1:30 – 2:30 pm at the Marlboro County Courthouse.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Delta prospect

Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff continued to interact with an active prospect for the Delta site. He stated staff was currently obtaining additional information regarding costs of certain building repairs or up fit, water supply, etc. He stated staff would update Council as the project progresses.

Delta environmental

Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff had finally received cost estimates for the final clean-up items for the Delta project. He stated the cost included the removal of chemicals still stored at the site, closure of a small waste lagoon, and the removal of some coal and testing for vapor intrusion. He stated the costs totaled approximately \$1.3 million. He stated staff anticipates that a large portion of these costs would be covered by grants but the approved County budget also included funds for this project. He stated everything that could be covered with grants would allow the County to use the restricted economic development funds to make other improvements to the site.

Solar projects

Mr. Munnerlyn stated there were three active solar projects showing interest in Marlboro County. He stated these prospects require property tax incentives just as manufacturing projects and stated staff had been working with the Economic Development attorney at Parker Poe to develop a formula for tax incentives based on amount of investment of each project. He stated there may be a need for another council meeting, or committee meeting to review the incentives suggested so that staff could tentatively answer requests for each prospect. He also stated staff was working to develop safeguards such as requiring buffers around the solar sites (landscaping, trees to block view) and requirements for removal of the panels at the end of their operation lives.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Meeting with Fire Committee – Mr. Munnerlyn stated Fire Coordinator Keith Hughes provided a couple of date options for a Fire Committee meeting to discuss strategic planning for the rural fire service and how we build on the success of the rural fire departments and best use tax dollars. He stated members of Council were welcome to attend, and asked that

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they please let Ms. Bundy know if they would like to do so. He stated the date options were July 30th at 6:30 pm or August 6th at 6:30 pm.

COVID-19 Update – Mr. Munnerlyn stated the COVID-19 Planning Committee met for the first time last Wednesday and would meet weekly moving forward. He stated several items were discussed, including encouraging folks to wear masks when entering the courthouse and during courtroom proceedings. He stated this was discussed at length and after the meeting, the Clerk of Court forwarded an email she had received from the State Judicial Branch office advising that Chief Justice Beatty intended to issue a statewide Order requiring everyone conducting business at county courthouses statewide to wear a face covering or mask and have their temperature taken prior to entry. He stated the purchase of thermal screening machines were also discussed and the Clerk of Court agreed to purchase two for the courthouse so that temperatures of folks may be checked before they enter the building.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Committee also agreed the library, museum and the Recreation Department should continue working as they have in the past few weeks and the committee would review it weekly to discuss any recommended changes as to the operation of these departments.

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. Charles P. Midgley, Jr. – encouraged everyone to stay safe, wear face masks, use hand sanitizer and continue to wash their hands.

Mr. Willie Gladden – No comments.

Mr. Steve Blackmon – No comments.

Ms. Corrie Plato – No comments.

Mr. Verd Odom – stated he had discussions with the property owners earlier in the day about the Academy Road bridge. He stated DHEC had provided a letter stating that the pond should be condemned which means the damn would be torn down, the pond would be drained and that would be the end of the Fletcher pond. He stated he and the property owners did not feel that was be an option. He stated Fletcher pond was more than 200 years old and used during the Civil War. He stated rice was grown there for the military and continued to be used after the Civil War. He stated he had a call into the Deputy Engineer to discuss further. He stated DHEC would ultimately make the final decision but the property owners did not like their proposal. He stated he would continue to discuss this further with Mr. Collins and with folks at DHEC.

Mr. Odom also mentioned Old Wire Road and wondered if the folks in that area would be satisfied with putting a pipe in to open the road back up. He stated if so, he felt that he could

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work with the folks at DOT to get it opened back up. He stated he had talked to some folks and he felt that they were just anxious to have the road open. He asked Chairman Steen what his thoughts were on this. Chairman Steen stated he just wanted the road opened. Mr. Odom stated he would call the engineer to let him know what most residents have said.

Mr. Anthony Woods – stated Council members worked together well as a group because they depend on one another in areas of strength. He mentioned Mr. Verd Odom and stated he had knowledge of the key players that assisted in getting the McColl bridge road opened and stated that he was now working with some of the same folks to get the Academy Road bridge and Old Wire Road opened. He stated the shine did not mean anything if things are not getting done. He encouraged members of Council to work together to get things done.

Mr. Woods mentioned the Personnel Policies and Procedures and stated many things have changed from the way things have been done in the past but stated that changes must be made in order to adapt. He stated he felt revising the Personnel Policies and Procedures was a good first step in assisting the County in moving forward.

Mr. Jason Steen – mentioned Old Wire Road and stated there were issues with the road years ago and the state used their equipment to repair the road. He stated citizens were continuing to question why the road has not been repaired this time since it had been repaired by the state in the past. He stated the road needed to be repaired and opened as quickly as possible.

Mr. Steen thanked staff for the revisions to the Personnel Policies and Procedures. He stated he thought it had been ten years since the policies and procedures were updated and he felt that the changes made were in line with the rules of the state.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

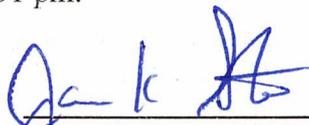
There were no non-agenda items.

ADJOURN

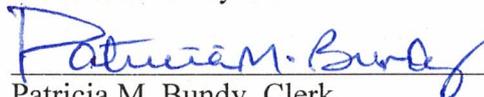
Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, asked if there were any other comments or business. There being none, he adjourned the meeting at 6:31 pm.

(SEAL)

ATTEST:



Jason K. Steen, Chairman
Marlboro County Council



Patricia M. Bundy, Clerk
Marlboro County Council

Adopted: August 11, 2020