

MARLBORO COUNTY COUNCIL

MARLBORO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

TUESDAY, MAY 19, 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, Councilmen Charles P. Midgley, Jr. and Verd Odom joined the meeting via Zoom, along with Attorney Andrew McLeod.

Others Present: Mr. Doug Carabo, Public Services Director.

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).

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, opened the meeting at 6:05 pm and stated things were continuing to be 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 also mentioned that Mr. Kenneth Stroman had been invited to join the meeting via zoom and recognized him. He stated that Mr. Stroman would only be observing during the meeting and would not be voting or taking any action. Chairman Steen stated since Mr. Stroman had filed for the position of County Council District 5 and had no opposition, he would be representing the citizens of District #5 for the remainder of this year and his election date, after being postponed several times, has been scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2020.

May 19, 2020 County Council Meeting

INVOCATION- Mr. Anthony Woods

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Willie Gladden, to approve the agenda as presented. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

APRIL 28, 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 April 28, 2020 as presented. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

OLD 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 – SECOND READING

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that staff was not as far along as they would like to be with the budget due to the disruptions of COVID-19. He stated there were no accurate numbers on what could be expected in revenue and there may be some expenses that are unknown at this time. Mr. Munnerlyn stated there was no tax revenue growth and other sources were decreasing. He stated the Legislature continued to underfund the Local Government Fund while continuing to issue unfunded mandates. He stated past expenses, such as Solid Waste fees, have placed a heavy burden on property owners.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated he felt each department should pay for their own services. He used Solid Waste as an example and stated it had its own fund which meant that all funds received for Solid Waste were deposited into that fund and all expenses were paid from that fund. He stated little comes from the General Fund to the Solid Waste fund from tax revenue. He stated the \$10 fee collected from municipalities was insufficient to cover the costs of operating the convenience centers. He stated staff continued to work hard to do their best not to make bad, long-term decisions based on short-term problems. He stated some amendments to the budget had taken place during the year and all were voted on by Council.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the starting point for the current year's approved budget, which includes approved budget amendments throughout the year, reflects expenses of \$11,638,920 and the revenues reflected for the year are \$11,206,300 which would result in

the county being required to use somewhere around \$432,620 from reserve funds to balance this year's budget. He stated these numbers were not set in stone and staff would not know exact numbers until the audit was completed but he felt they were pretty close.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated for the upcoming year there would be some mandatory expense changes which included an increase of employee's health insurance in the amount of \$75,000 and 1% increase in retirement contribution in the amount of \$75,000. He also stated there were other miscellaneous increases estimated in the amount of \$40,000. He stated with these mandatory increases, the total expenses estimated for next year totaled \$11,828,920. He stated revenues would decrease next year due to tax filots in an approximate amount of \$117,262. He stated this decrease was estimated due to the amount of taxes collected on equipment of industries. He used the old Baldor company in Clio as an example and stated that Baldor company had very expensive equipment in the building which caused their taxes to be higher. He stated that company has closed and now Arris Manufacturing occupies that building but their equipment is not as expensive which would result in lower taxes. He stated with these known facts, planning next year's budget as things are presently would result in using approximately \$739,882 from the fund balance.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated a 2% cost of living increase could be considered for all employees which would cost about \$135,000 and he felt there was a need for competitive wages. He also mentioned the possibility of additional lease vehicles for other departments such as Public Works which would cost about \$50,000 but would ultimately result in real savings in maintenance over the period of the lease. He stated with leased vehicles, the leasing company handles all maintenance and provides guidance on when it may be time to replace vehicles based on depreciation values.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated he felt the next steps for staff would be to work hard to reduce expenses. He stated in the past departments have had "extra" funds or "fluff" included in their budgets for emergencies; however he suggested that staff work aggressively to adjust budgets to amounts actually needed with no extras with department heads understanding that staff will help them find money to purchase anything that was desperately needed for their departments during the year. He suggested staff should use fund balance or amendments in case of unplanned expenses during the year. He also suggested that staff evaluate all employee vacancies as they become open. He stated he felt in some cases, and certainly not all, some positions created by employees that retire may not need to be filled or replaced which would result in savings. He stated this could be reviewed as vacancies in departments become available.

Mr. Munnerlyn asked if there were any questions or comments.

Chairman Steen asked if the closing of the Arauco plant caused the decrease in projected revenue. Mr. Munnerlyn responded it did not. He stated the county would not see that decrease in projected revenue until the following year due to the way taxes are collected.

Mr. Anthony Woods asked if the numbers provided were staff's best guess. Mr. Munnerlyn confirmed the numbers were their best estimates right now but that staff would look to see where more cuts could be made.

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Chairman Steen stated that staff had cut expenses already but asked that they please sharpen their pencils to see what could be done. He stated he understood that they work hard to do this anyway.

Mr. Woods asked if there were any employees considering retirement in the upcoming year. Mr. Munnerlyn stated that about 20% of the county's employees were over the age of 60 and that was certainly something that could be considered.

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 second reading 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 – SECOND READING

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Capital Improvement Plan was the companion document to the budget and served as a planning guide where staff lists equipment and capital improvements that may be needed over a five year period. He stated staff would have an updated plan to review along with the final budget for consideration.

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 the second reading 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.

NEW BUSINESS

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

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated this document would allow staff to postpone the reassessment for one year. He stated this document, once approved, would be submitted to the State requesting that our Tax Assessor be provided an additional year to handle the reassessment process more accurately, which would certainly benefit the County.

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

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Willie Gladden, to approve the first reading of Ordinance # 797 – an Ordinance to Postpone the Implementation Revised Values Resulting from the Equalization Program. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION # 05-20-01 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS BY MARLBORO COUNTY FOR GRANTS THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT AND THE CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTING FUNDING (CESF) PROGRAM

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that funds are being made available to counties through grant funds due to COVID-19. He stated a CARES grant for the airport in the amount of \$20,000 was available, as well as a JAG grant for EMS and the Sheriff's Department in the amount of \$32,880. He stated these grants do not require any match of funds from the County. He also stated this Resolution would allow the County to apply for any other grants that may be available due to COVID-19.

Chairman Steen read the Resolution aloud.

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

Motion made by Mr. Willie Gladden, seconded by Mr. Anthony Woods, to approve Resolution # 05-20-01 – a Resolution Authorizing Submission of Applications by Marlboro County for Grants that may be Available Through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act and the Coronavirus Emergency Supplementing Funding (CESF) Program. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF RENEWAL OF DETENTION CENTER'S INMATE HEALTH CARE SERVICES CONTRACT WITH MEDIKO

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Detention Center's Inmate Health Care Services Contract with MEDIKO is renewed annually and the amount for the upcoming year had originally increased by 3% but staff was able to get the amount reduced to 2% for an annual total of approximately \$157,000. He stated Warden Thomas, Sheriff Lemon and the finance staff recommended that the contract renewal be approved.

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

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Motion made by Mr. Willie Gladden, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to approve the renewal of the Detention Center's Inmate Health Care Services Contract with MEDIKO. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

OPENING & ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS

RENEWAL OF THIRD PARTY BILLING AGREEMENT FOR EMS

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that staff received two proposals for the renewal of EMS's third party billing agreement and staff recommended the low bid from EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. and stated the monthly fee was equal to 5.25% of the net collections as set forth in the contract. He stated this was the same vendor which EMS currently uses for third party billing.

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 the renewal of the Third Party Billing Agreement for EMS with EMS Management & Consultants, Inc. for a monthly fee equal to 5.25% of "Net Collections". Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

There were no recommended appointments to boards or commissions.

REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT – MS. AINSLEY MOORE

Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, read the Finance Report on behalf of Ms. Ainsley Moore.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that for the month of April, expenditures were at 76% of the budgeted amount which was still about 7% under budget for this point in the fiscal year. He stated revenues for the month of April were in line with this same period in prior years.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated despite the difficulties created by the COVID-19 crisis, staff has been diligently working to create a conservative budget while also maintaining services to citizens. He stated this becomes even more challenging by the continued shortfall in state funding versus state mandated expenses.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that pursuant to the SCAC's website, the General Assembly passed a continuing resolution, which would keep state government operational in case a state budget is not passed by July 1, 2020 and the continuing resolution calls for funding at the same level as the current year.

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 April: Ainsley Moore (7 years); Teresa Burgess (18 years); Brian Oxendine (7 years); Arthur Hamer (22 years); Charles Lemon (13 years); Franklin Smith (5 years); Amber Goings (5 years); and Sharon Thomas (15 years).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Prospect activity-

Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff has had some prospect activity with an inquiry regarding warehouse/distribution. He stated companies seem to be trying to make plans for the future based on long term change to how they do business.

Delta-

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the environmental engineers were working to test and remove barrels of textile chemical stored at the Delta site. He stated this activity was the beginning of the clean-up phase for the site. He stated he was pleased to finally see some activity after a couple of years of prep work. He also stated that staff was working to install warehouse doors and basic electricity to the newer 200,000 square foot warehouse at the site. He stated he hoped to soon have this portion of the property available for lease as staff works on the rest of the site.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Rural Fire Funds -

Mr. Munnerlyn stated Mr. Keith Hughes, the County Fire Coordinator, had submitted a request for \$20,000 for each of the 5 rural fire departments from the rural fire fund balance. He stated this fund does have an adequate fund balance reserve above the \$100,000 request but the request would have to be approved by County Council as a budget amendment. He stated these requests were apparently prepared separately by each department and are for different combinations of items.

June Council Meeting -

Mr. Munnerlyn reminded members of Council that the June Council meeting was pushed back to the third Tuesday of June (June 16, 2020) due to the Primary Election being held on the second Tuesday.

COVID-19 Operational Update -

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that county offices continue to operate with clear plastic barriers installed to separate the public from staff. He stated the Clerk of Court and Probate Judge were also limiting public access on a case by case basis and utilizing appointments.

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Mr. Munnerlyn stated all County employees have been directed to continue to maintain a separation of 6 feet or more and in situations where that is not possible on a short term basis, to wear a mask which staff has provided.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated offices are continuing to rotate office personnel when possible to allow employees to work from home using laptops.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated with regards to Recreation, the Museums or other public programs, staff continues to review the situation on a weekly basis He stated since the state has decided that it is unsafe for children to be in classrooms together , likewise staff feels it prudent to not open recreation or the museums at this time.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Library Board began curbside pickup services on May 11, 2020 for books, DVDs, books on CD and magazines. He stated patrons are encouraged to call the library at 843-479-5630 ext. 0 Monday through Friday from 9:00 am - 4:30 pm to reserve their books. He suggested patrons also visit palmetto.polarislibrary.com and log in to place a hold on your items. He stated after placing holds, library staff would call the patron and schedule a time for pickup of the items reserved.

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. Verd Odom – stated everything seemed to be going good. He mentioned the “Welcome to Marlboro County” sign located at the state line in McColl and stated it looked really nice.

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr. – stated everything was good. He encouraged everyone to stay safe. He commended staff on all their efforts in keeping things at the county moving forward during concerns of COVID-19.

Mr. Willie Gladden – stated he agreed that the county recreation activities should be held off for a while longer. He stated numbers in other surrounding counties continue to rise daily and suggested keeping things closed down for a while longer.

Mr. Steve Blackmon – stated things were going well but agreed that the County should not rush in opening recreation and museums. He suggested staff continue operating as they have for the past few weeks. He stated rushing back into opening things could cause a real problem and then we would have to begin all over again.

Mr. Anthony Woods – stated he agreed with not rushing things. He stated things like Census 2020 must happen but suggested all other activities should continue to be postponed for a while. He stated urgent care facilities were offering free testing for the virus and stated he felt all that were able should be tested.

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Mr. Jason Steen – stated since the last Council meeting, the County lost a great employee and friend, Mr. Ricky Gooden. He stated Mr. Gooden would be missed by everyone especially Mr. Doug Carabo and the folks at Public Works. He encouraged everyone to continue to pray for all those affected with the virus. He also encouraged everyone to continue to work moving forward. He stated he understood that children want to play ball and get out and play with their friends but felt that the County should hold off and continue to operate as we have a for a while longer.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

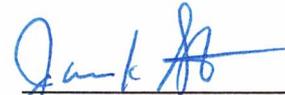
There were no non-agenda items.

ADJOURN

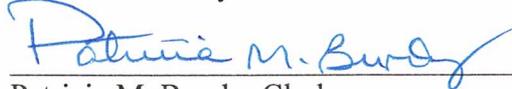
Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, asked if there were any other comments or business. There being none, he adjourned the meeting at 6:40 pm.

(SEAL)

ATTEST:



Jason K. Steen, Chairman
Marlboro County Council



Patricia M. Bundy, Clerk
Marlboro County Council

Adopted: June 23, 2020