

MARLBORO COUNTY COUNCIL
MARLBORO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BUILDING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023

6 PM

CHAIRMAN

CHARLES P. MIDGLEY, JR

VICE CHAIRMAN
CLERK TO COUNCIL
COUNTY ATTORNEY

JASON STEEN
SUSAN RIVERS
ANDREW MCLEOD

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

DR. DAMIEN JOHNSON
PEARLY LAWSON
VERD ODOM
ANTHONY WOODS

- Absent

Others Present: Ms. Doris Sumpter, Administrative Services Director; Mr. Doug Carabo, Public Services Director; Mr. Wes Park, Finance Director; and Ms. Jacqueline Hough, Herald Advocate.

A copy of the Regular Meeting Notice and agenda were posted on the front door of the William P. Wallace, Sr. Administration Building and on the Marlboro County Website. A copy of the agenda was provided to Ms. Jacqueline Hough, Herald Advocate prior to the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER – Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr. Chairman called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

INVOCATION – Mr. Anthony Woods

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman advised that an executive session would be needed later in the meeting for the discussion of an economic development and personnel issue.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion made by Mr. Jason Steen, seconded by Mr. Anthony Woods, to approve the Agenda as presented. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS – Sheriff Larry McNeil

South Carolina Sheriff's Association Life Saving Award – Deputy Joshua Hatcher, MCSO Recipient.

Sheriff McNeil advised that on December 24, 2022 while on patrol Hickory Grove Road during the night shift with 18 degree weather Deputy Joshua Hatcher through his brave efforts saved the life of Mr. Vondrea Johnson. Officer Hatcher passed what he thought were tail lights from a vehicle down in a ravine. He stopped and backed up, went to the side of the ravine and saw a vehicle submerged in the water. He proceeded to try and find out if anyone was in the vehicle by continually hitting on it. Just as he was about to knock out the back window, the drivers side door opened and the driver came out into the water in a daze moving further from the vehicle. Eventually, Officer Hatcher was able to get Mr. Johnson out of the water, where he was taken to the hospital. It was several days later when Sheriff McNeil learned of the situation. He was informed that without the heroics of Officer Hatcher, Mr. Johnson would probably have died that night. A copy of the events (Attachment A) are attached as part of the minutes. As a result of his heroic actions, Deputy Hatcher was awarded the South Carolina Sheriff's Association "Life Saving Award".

Update on Law Enforcement Coverage for Towns

Chief McNeil advised that both McColl and Clio have Police Chiefs. The problem is not having certified officers. Currently, the Marlboro County Sheriff's Department Officers are answering all calls for both towns, but, do not patrol either town. If they have to work any over time in McColl, they get reimbursed. However, Clio has worked out something with the Police Chief, so there is no agreement for reimbursement. Normally, the police chiefs work days. Eventually, the Sheriff's Department will need something done for them by Marlboro County Council. This is because if they continue to answer these calls, it will stretch their manpower which is already stretched more. McColl is adding more calls on top of what they normally have. This will eventually have to be addressed by council as to what they are doing. It is a burden to them when having to answer additional calls. Sheriff McNeil advised they have had 2 separate suicide calls on February 9th at the same time of which both were kids. They were trying to get to two separate places at the same time which takes approximately 25-30 minutes to get to each call. He said the fix all is, they need more officers. It takes approximately 25-30 minutes to get to each call.

Mr. Jason Steen asked how many calls are the Marlboro County Sheriffs office having to make in McColl. Sheriff McNeil responded 15 every 45 minutes to an hour on a daily basis. If he had enough people he could put a person in each area which would be the ideal situation.

Mr. Verd Odom asked if McColl was trying to get any officers now. Sheriff McNeil responded that they had a couple of possibilities a few weeks ago, however, but, it didn't work out. He does believe everyone is looking, but, it's hard to find officers now. It's a National problem. Everybody is short. Marlboro County is blessed. We have a treasure here with the officers we have. But, it

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

doesn't help. Half of their calls come from McColl. Marlboro County needs help. He advised he would be making a pitch for more officers during the budget process.

Mr. Kenneth Stroman asked if there was anything coming down the pipe from the Academy. Was there anything that looked certified? Sheriff McNeil said no, everybody was having the same problems. It has now become a salary thing, who's got the money, who can pay the most. It's hard to compete when guys are starting at \$45,000-\$50,000 while Marlboro County is starting at \$34,000. We can not compete. Marlboro County is fortunate because we have people that live here, that love what they do, and want to be home. Sheriff McNeil said he appreciated that.

Sheriff McNeil thanked the Legislature for their help a few weeks prior when they held a opioid presentation in McColl. Representative Patricia Henegan, Senator Kent Williams, and Senator Gerald Malloy all attended and helped. He had reached out to Congressman Russell Fry, however, he was unable to attend. All of them participated and agreed to help whenever they can. Sheriff McNeil advised he had sent them a wish list of all the capital items Marlboro County needs. They now have that list. According to all three of them, they said they have never been asked before, so now they have been asked, and he believes they will help us with our wish list.

He advised there will be another opioid presentation in March. Representative Henegan has asked to partner with the Marlboro County Sheriff Office along with Trinity Behavioral and the ADT Alcoholic Response Team. Sheriff McNeil thanked Pastor Donald Deal and his church, the Mayor of McColl, and the McColl Police Chief for all the help they provided in McColl.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Nominations & Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Chairman

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman, asked for nominations for Chairman of Marlboro County Council.

Motion made by Mr. Verd Odom, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to elect Mr. Charles Midgley, Jr., to serve as Chairman to Marlboro County Council. Vote in favor: Mr. Charles Midgley, Jr., Mr. Jason Steen, Mr. Steve Blackmon, and Mr. Verd Odom. Opposed: Mr. Anthony Woods, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, and Dr. Damien Johnson. Abstain: Ms. Pearly Lawson. Vote: 4/3/1. Motion Carried.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, to elect Dr. Damien Johnson to serve as Chairman to Marlboro County Council. Vote in favor: Mr. Anthony Woods, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, and Dr. Damien Johnson. Opposed: Mr. Charles Midgley, Jr., Mr. Jason Steen, Mr. Steve Blackmon, and Mr. Verd Odom. Abstain: Ms. Pearly Lawson. Vote: 3/4/1. Motion Failed.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Chairman Midgley remains as Chairman.

Vice-Chairman

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman, asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman of Marlboro County Council.

Motion made by Mr. Steve Blackmon, seconded by Mr. Verd Odom, to elect Mr. Jason Steen to serve as Vice-Chairman to Marlboro County Council. Vote in favor: Mr. Charles Midgley, Jr., Mr. Jason Steen, Mr. Steve Blackmon, and Mr. Verd Odom. Opposed: Mr. Anthony Woods, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, and Dr. Damien Johnson. Abstain: Ms. Pearly Lawson. Vote: 4/3/1. Motion Carried.

Motion made by Dr. Damien Johnson, seconded by Mr. Anthony Woods, to elect Mr. Kenneth Stroman to serve as Vice-Chairman to Marlboro County Council. Vote in favor: Mr. Anthony Woods, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, and Dr. Damien Johnson. Opposed: Mr. Charles Midgley, Jr., Mr. Jason Steen, Mr. Steve Blackmon, and Mr. Verd Odom. Abstain: Ms. Pearly Lawson. Vote: 3/4/1. Motion Failed.

Chairman Midgley, Jr. advised that Mr. Jason Steen would remain in office as Vice-Chairman.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

DECEMBER 13, 2022 – COUNCIL “WORK SESSION”

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, to approve the December 13, 2022 Council Work Session Minutes as written. Vote in favor: Mr. Anthony Woods, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, Dr. Damien Johnson, Mr. Verd Odom, Mr. Charles Midgley, Jr., Mr. Jason Steen, and Mr. Steve Blackmon. Abstain: Ms. Pearly Lawson. Vote: 7/0/1. Motion Carried.

DECEMBER 13, 2022 – REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Motion made by Mr. Jason Steen, seconded by Mr. Anthony Woods, to approve the December 13, 2022 Council Meeting minutes as written. Vote in favor: Mr. Anthony Woods, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, Mr. Charles Midgley, Jr., Mr. Jason Steen, Dr. Damien Johnson, Mr. Steve Blackmon, and Mr. Verd Odom. Abstain: Ms. Pearly Lawson. Vote: 7/0/1. Motion Carried.

JANUARY 10, 2023 – REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Ms. Pearly Lawson requested a correction to the minutes. She advised Ms. Judy Fullard was an appointment and not reappointment to the Library Board. The minutes will be corrected as requested.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Jason Steen, seconded by Mr. Verd Odom, to approve the December 13, 2022 Council Meeting minutes with the correction. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion Carried.

JANUARY 13, 2023 – “CALLED” COUNCIL MEETING

Motion made by Mr. Jason Steen, seconded by Mr. Verd Odom, to approve the December 13, 2022 Council Meeting minutes as written. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion Carried.

OLD BUSINESS

RECREATION AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES – STATUS UPDATE

Chairman Midgley recognized Mr. Munnerlyn to update council on the Recreation and Community Improvement Initiatives.

Mr. Munnerlyn provided a print out (attached to the minutes) of Approved Phase 1 Projects. The sources of other funds are: \$250,000 (Love Foundation) for the gold course with the possibility of a total donation of \$500,000 once it becomes profitable; \$350,000 (Lake Paul Wallace Authority – Confirmed) for the Lake Boardwalk and \$1,500,000 (CDBG Grants) for City & Town Image concerns.

The County’s approved portion for the projects (Phase I) are:

- Golf Course \$2,469,400
- Golf Course operating deficit reserve (2 years) \$ 449,328
- Lake Boardwalk \$ 350,000
- Splash Pad w/restrooms \$ 500,000
- Downtown rest stop \$ 650,000
- City & town image concerns – Towns \$ 225,000
- City & town image concerns – Corridors \$ 275,000

The total cost for the County for Phase I projects is \$4,918,728.

The Available Funds are:

- ARPA Funds \$4,000,000
- State Budget proviso (FY 2022-23) \$2,000,000
- County Reserve fund balance \$ 500,000
- Private Foundation support (possible additional) \$ 250,000

Projected Available Funds are \$6,750,000.

The maximum possible remainder of funds for Phase 2 Use is \$1,831,272.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Phase 2 Possible Projects are:

- Pool / recreation complex or \$6,000,000
- Pool ONLY \$2,500,000

Mr. Munnerlyn provided updates for the various projects.

Board Walk

- Staff prepared the draft RFQ for contractors.
- Lake Authority has just received money from the state.
- Lake Authority requests max budget or \$400,000 (which would leave some money for other projects).
- SC DNR will lower the lake levels to facilitate construction – saving money. They have no concerns with building.
- Mid-March target for approval of RFP's.

Golf Course

Mr. Munnerlyn stated he had an excellent meeting with Mr. Rick Elliot (son of late Senator Dick Elliot) at the beach and then with the Town of Kershaw's leadership. Kershaw has a golf course which they have owned since the 30's which makes profit. He learned a lot of information that can be helpful to Marlboro County. Mr. Munnerlyn provided the following information for the golf course:

- The official switch over for is March 1, 2023 with operating at current level with target for major upgrades of Memorial Day.
- Staff is determining the possible availability of carts and equipment – so far there is a year lead time (we can use the current golf carts for a year at a cost).
- Posted key positions and have interviewed – currently making offers to hire the inside and outside managers. Have to very qualified people.
- Pool being assessed by professional service within next 2 weeks (of meeting) so we will know if we can move into the aquatic side or it cannot be repaired at all. Mr. Parks is working with this.
- Suggest a “golf committee” ASAP (list of golfers that attended meeting attached)

Mr. Anthony Woods asked with respect to the Recreation Initiative, has Mr. Adairius Williams, Recreation Director had any input into this process. Mr. Munnerlyn responded “Yes”, he along with a committee of staff are digging into it. Mr. Williams long term responsibility will be the programming side of it. It is hands on deck, because everyone has something to bring to the table.

Ms. Pearly Lawson said she liked what Mr. Gould said in the meeting when he suggested that the name be changed. He also suggested that the schools be involved performing golf programs for our local high school and she was going to encourage the Middle school to be a part of it. He also suggested that with golfing – the fees, no matter what the age, what the race, etc., they will be able

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

to participate in the golf initiative. Ms. Lawson said she was not a voting member on it, but, because it is a part of the issue now, she wants to see fairness – that ever body that wants to participate in golf has the opportunity and where the fees are not so high, that it's just for the experts. She said she appreciated the experts, however, she would like them to take a part of being mentors for people who want to learn to have that opportunity. If it had not been for Mr. Herbert Washington who was a member of the golf course, taking an initiative to have her son play on the golf course, and providing him with the equipment, her son would not have had the opportunity. A lot of these children will not have equipment, things like that are important to her.

Mr. Munnerlyn said he did have some notes from the meeting and he would distribute them to council. He thought it was a wise thing to look at the name. He thought that was a workshop item. Mr. Munnerlyn said he was hoping they would at least consider keeping the “Marlboro” as part of the name so they could keep some identity there. It was not going to be a country club. And as far as the involvement of the schools, our Director Mr. Adairius Williams, that's one of the reasons he stood out when he was hired, his expertise in outreach and developing programs.

Ms. Lawson said there was a school board member present at the meeting. She said partnering with the school would be a good thing.

Dr. Damien Johnson said to make a note that the school has a golf team that is actively practicing, so that coordination would only enhance that.

Mr. Munnerlyn advised the Chairman he may want to consider having a work shop out at the golf course. That way they could walk around and get a feel for things. He said he had taken notes on their remarks and would include them with his notes from the meeting. He wanted to make sure they had a list of the golfers that had attended the meeting. That way, if they ran across them, they could ask their opinion of various things.

Ms. Lawson wanted to know if council could add names to the list.

Mr. Munnerlyn advised that was up to them. He just wanted to give them a starting point. He said this was not suggestions for a committee.

Mr. Verd Odom said all the golfers that attended the meeting were not on the list. He would like to reach out to them again. They had made great suggestions.

Mr. Stroman said he would like to have some council members on the committee so they could report back to full council.

Broad Street

- Closing targeted for week (after meeting).
- Field work completed by consultant and now awaiting assessment necessary to solicit demolition estimates/bids.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

- Once we have budget numbers, will develop plan for remaining County funds if no City participation. We will have that information for you so you can make decisions.
- One good thing is that there is a SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism Grant that could be up to \$500,000 which could go for this project. These projects are encouraged by them. Finance Staff preparing the August 2023 application, with a Fall 2024 award.

That just shows that on any of the things council is considering, they need to be made scalable. That way the county can do things now and when more money is available, you can make them even better. You do not want to do something that you will have to undo in the future to go forward. Money like this can make a difference.

Mr. Woods asked who applied for the grants.

Mr. Munnerlyn responded that finance or other departments such as the Sheriff's Department apply for them. Right now the as he has discussed with Ms. Lawson, the County has a Grants Administrator. This is because most of the grant that we have now are the easy ones that come with a lot of paper work. Council certainly needs to discuss in their budget process this year the possibility of hiring a Grant Writer, someone who goes out and looks for them.

Splash Pad

- Reevaluate location since no City participation.
- Awaiting assessment of pool at Golf Course for final discussion of splash pad/water facility design/scope.

After getting the assessment back, he would like to bring the information back to council at a work shop to help them make a decision. The assessment is March 1st and results should come back very quickly.

NEW BUSINESS

REQUEST TO APPROVE A NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A STATE-ISSUED CERTIFICATE OF FRANCHISE AUTHORITY AND REQUEST FOR INFORMATION.

Mr. Munnerlyn said this is kind of interesting. If anyone has been out in the country lately and seen a lot of people pulling underground cable, they may think it is Sandhill's pulling internet cable. However, a lot of it is Spectrum which also provides internet service. They are pushing hard to come into the county and compete. In order to do this, they must first go through the State to provide the paper work which is then sent to the County for approval. At this time the county can charge a maximum of 5% franchise fee of their gross proceeds. This could provide revenue as well as competition always helps with prices. We have gone from 6% of the county having internet to 62% having it. This is fiber internet. Mr. Munnerlyn requested council approve the notice of application for a state-issued certificate of franchise authority and request for a maximum of 5 % franchise fee.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Verd Odom, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon to approve the Notice of Application for a State-Issued Certificate of Franchise Authority and request for 5% of the franchise fee. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion Carried.

ORDINANCE # 833 – AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE AGREEMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A JOINT COUNTY INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS PARK (2016 PARK) OF DILLON AND MARLBORO COUNTIES SO AS TO ENLARGE THE PARK. (TITLE ONLY).

Mr. Munnerlyn advised this is not a plot of land, it's just a legal agreement between 2 counties. This is Dillon County's project. It allows the county that has the actual industry to provide greater incentives and also control the distribution of the tax monies. In return, we get 1% (which isn't much) of the revenue from the project. It also helps us like projects we have had in the past, it gives us the ability to keep 10% of the proceeds and put that money into the Economic Development Fund to use when we need it. This is Title Only. We've been the host and the recipient.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Jason Steen, to approve the First Reading (Title Only) of Ordinance # 833 – An Ordinance to amend the agreement for the development of a joint county Industrial and Business Park (2016 Park) of Dillon and Marlboro Counties so as to enlarge the park. Vote in favor: Mr. Anthony Woods, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, Mr. Charles Midgley, Jr., Mr. Jason Steen, Dr. Damien Johnson, Mr. Steve Blackmon, and Mr. Verd Odom. Abstain: Ms. Pearly Lawson. Vote: 7/0/1. Motion Carried.

Ms. Lawson advised she abstained because she would like to know more.

REQUEST FROM REPRESENTATIVE HENEGAN FOR ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN HER REQUEST FOR THE STATE BUDGET.

Mr. Munnerlyn advised he had received an email from Representative Henegan asking if the county has any request from the State Budget. She advised if they did, they need to go ahead and give her something as a placeholder. Mr. Munnerlyn advised last year the County requested \$5 Million and received \$2 Million. Last years request was directed toward general recreation projects. He said he needed direction from Council. Mr. Munnerlyn stated "last time it came to County Council and you were able to determine where you wanted to spend it". He recommended putting in a request like last year, have a work shop to discuss more details and then he believed they could go back and fine tune it. He advised it is a timely thing so Representative Henegan can get it in the budget.

Ms. Lawson questioned "Before March"?

Mr. Woods said "I think we need to go ahead and just do a request like last year and bump it up to \$8 Million. That's my suggestion.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Chairman Midgely asked if Mr. Woods would like to put that as a motion.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Jason Steen authorizing the Administrator to provide Representative Henegan with a request for \$8 Million for recreational projects from the State Budget with exact determination as to how it will be spent by Council at a later date. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion Carried.

FIRE DEPARTMENT AIR PACK REPLACEMENT

Mr. Munnerlyn advised the Certification process changed rendering the current air packs out of compliance once inspection time comes around. The bad news is the cost of \$800,000 to replace all. The good news if the Rural Fire Fund has it's own dedicated tax millage for fire use only. The target is to maintain a 5-6 months reserve. This department is different from other departments. If a copy machine were to burn up in the Administration Building, it would cost \$2500 to replace. If a tornado were to knock out a fire station, it would cost hundreds of thousands to replace. Because of this risk, you want to retain reserve.

He and Mr. Wes Park's recommendation is to use \$300,000 of the reserve to purchase some of the air packs and then finance the rest over 5 years. This is a typical thing that the county does and has done in the past. It will have no impact on the general fund because it comes out of the Rural Fire fund.

The recommendation is that the Administrator and staff be given permission to proceed with taking that \$300,000 and go ahead and buy what is needed right now. And if council is agreeable this will be the first reading (Title Only). Then staff can go out and get some rates from the banks and bring back to council to vote on two more times. This is an option or just to buy out of reserve. The Ordinance (First Reading) will be # 835

Mr. Verd Odom asked if we bought them all at one time, would the county get a discount to service all the Fire Departments in the county whether it 100 or 200? We would be on the same time line as far as the life of the air packs.

Chairman Midgley said this would be a big hit.

Mr. Munnerlyn said this department is different from the other departments. If a copy machine were to burn up in the Administration Building, you could replace it for \$2500. If a tornado were to hit and take out a fire station, it would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to replace. Because of that risk, you want to try to retain reserve.

Mr. Munnerlyn said it would be nice to kind of stagger them. If the county can get past this, he recommended when doing the budget in the future to set some funds aside for these type of things.

Mr. Anthony Woods said each Fire Department has their own account. Could they dip into some of their own accounts and the county could do a match of what they have? This is just an option.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Mr. Woods said “Because if we were to have a tornado, then we would have a situation, where we have to go to the other general fund”. He recommended getting the numbers and bring them back to council and they would see what they could do and what the Fire Departments would like to do.

Mr. Jason Steen said “ in dealing with the Fire Departments, the facts are that the air packs are out of date, they have expired. When the tester comes along, normally they can add hydromel to them and they will pass. This time, they did not pass”. He said when they started failing, it’s a life saving thing. If they were to go to a house fire without the air packs and someone was in the house, they could not go in. He advised each truck requires a certain number of packs and you have to have a certain number of trucks in each area. With the \$300,000 the county could get some for all of the departments and immediately as fast as possible obtain a loan to purchase the rest. He said “It’s one of those things, it’s like water without a hose. It’s a life saving thing, it’s very important”. He would like staff to bring it back to the fire committee with the fire chiefs to come up with a 5 to 10 year plan on how to replace some of these things. He advised a lot of the air packs had to be pulled from the trucks because they did not pass. The fire departments had applied for grants, which could have been used, however, the grants fell through. If they had not, the county would not have been in this situation. The air packs are needed.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that for the last 5 to 6 years, Council has strategically tried to move away from just giving money to people (not just the fire departments) where they just use the money to go and do their own thing. This is one of the things that the county just needs to buy right now, so this is out of the equation. They fire departments can not run without the air packs or trucks. This is an emergency situation and we need to move forward with as much as we can.

Chairman Midgley asked if there was a motion.

Motion made by Mr. Verd Odom, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to approve up to \$800,000 for the air packs for all the Fire Departments using \$300,000 from the Rural Fire Reserve and obtaining rates from the banks for financing the remaining \$500,000 for council approval. This is the initial First Reading. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF GRANT TO ASSIST WITH SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM

Sheriff Larry McNeil was recognized to discuss the grant.

Sheriff McNeil did say that in defense of the Fire Departments, if the ISO ratings are up, the premiums go down. That helps the county as a whole and the citizens appreciate that.

Sheriff McNeil advised that Marlboro County Sheriff’s Department acquired the Clio and McColl School’s this year to provide School Resource Officers. They were able to do a grant application this year with the School District for both schools. They are just now finishing up with the application for the amount of \$303,126 for 2 SROs which covers everything needed for both Clio and McColl – all equipment plus the salaries for both officers. They are confident the grant will be approved.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

The only difference will be having to go back to the School District to redo a new contract for the other existing schools (Wallace & Blenheim) to upgrade their salaries. There would have to be an agreement to amend the contract they have now. He didn't think it would be a problem.

Sheriff McNeil said all he needed was for Council to approve the grant application which has been finished. He advised both the Captain and Sergeant worked hard to get it done. They are ready to submit it. It is a State Funded grant. The money will come to them, be turned over to Finance to deposit into a separate account. Once accepted, the grant will be ongoing forever.

Mr. Stroman asked if this covers the vehicles. Sheriff McNeil responded "Yes, it covers everything".

Ms. Lawson said she had a question out of the blue. She questioned "the SROs are there for the school hours, is that correct"? Sheriff McNeil responded "Yes ma'am". Ms. Lawson questioned where the officers would be during the summer. Sheriff McNeil advised their contract is for 12 months. The School has access to the officers when school is out, they always have after school programs. They stay there year-round. He also advised that starting next year, the schools would run year-round.

Chairman Midgley asked if they would be dedicated officers. Sheriff McNeil advised they would be. They have 1 supervisor and 3 regular SROs of which one is dedicated to each school.

Mr. Munnerlyn advised staff is in full support of approving the grant.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Jason Steen to approve the grant to assist with the School Resource Officer Program. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION # 02-23-01- A RESOLUTION URGING SUPPORT OF COST OF ANIMAL LEGISLATION, HB 3682 AND SB 456.

Mr. Donald Hamilton, Code Enforcement was recognized to discuss the issue.

He read the Resolution that discussed how animals seized in criminal animal cruelty cases may be held by the shelter for years while criminal charges are prosecuted. Under current law the financial burden falls on the local agencies and taxpayers until the final resolution of the criminal case. The current law only allows the shelters to seek reimbursement Post-Conviction of which they generally are unable to collect, while the new law would allow Pre-criminal trial. Sometimes an animal is held for years.

Mr. Hamilton advised they have been trained and certified. They carry guns, handcuffs and may make arrests. A Pee Dee Regional Animal Task Force has been started and meets monthly. They handle various situations to include: Fighting Rings, Hoarding, and Cock fighting.

Council was requested to support HB 3682 and SB 456.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Dr. Damien Johnson, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to approve Resolution # 02-23-01 – A Resolution urging support of Cost of Animal Legislation, HR 3682 and SB 456. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion Carried.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FROM MARLBORO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD

A letter was received from the Marlboro County Economic Development Partnership’s Executive Board advising that at their December meeting, the Board voted to reappoint Mr. Andy Rogers as Chairman, Mr. Fred Thomas as Vice-Chairman, and Mr. Frankie Frazier as Secretary/Treasurer.

They respectfully requested the reappointment of the following Board Members whose terms expired at the end of December:

- Mr. Andy Rogers, Chairman Business & Industry Palmetto Brick
- Mr. Wes Park Small Business, Service Business Breeden Inn
- Mr. Fred Thomas, Vice-Chair Bennettsville Resident with related experience
- Mr. Frankie Frazier Marlboro County Resident with related experience
- Mr. Luke Johnakin Marlboro County Resident with related experience

They advised that Ms. Joan Johnakin a “Marlboro County Resident with related experience” has indicated that she does not wish to be reappointed which leaves a vacancy in this field.

A copy of the list from the previous meeting was not included in the packet. It was the same list of appointees.

Ms. Lawson said she would like to discuss before taking a vote. Chairman Midgley recognized her to speak. She said she still had her list. She wanted it put on the record that she appreciated everything on the list, but, she had gone back 12 years and looked at Marlboro County’s Unemployment rate. Marlboro County has had the highest unemployment rate for the last 12 years or more. She was not trying to throw shade at anyone, but the sad thing for her was in looking at the list, she saw a lot of names that have been on the board for 14 to 16 years. For her, in district 4, she wants the opportunity, because business people have come to her that would like to serve. She was not trying to shut down the whole list. But, she would like to offer some names for anyone on the list that serves in district 4. That was not asking too much.

Mr. Munnerlyn advised the appointments were based on the ordinance stipulations. If they wanted to change the Ordinance, they’d have to put it back up for vote.

Ms. Lawson, said that is what she had wanted to do. They need to review the ordinances and procedures. She wants to make her own stand. She wants to be able to make her own decisions and recommendations. She needs this step for herself and the people in her district.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Chairman Midgely asked if there were any other questions.

Mr. Stroman asked in reference to the Boards and Commissions that Ms. Lawson was talking about – did each have their own Ordinance with By-Laws? Mr. Munnerlyn responded “Yes”. Mr. Stroman questioned if someone could serve on the boards for 20 to 30 years? Mr. Munnerlyn advised that each board had their own stipulations.

Motion made by Dr. Damien Johnson, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman to table the vote until Council had the opportunity to review the Ordinance to see if any changes needed to be made before moving on. Vote in favor: Mr. Anthony Woods, Ms. Pearly Lawson, Mr. Kenneth Stroman, Dr. Damien Johnson, Mr. Steve Blackmon, and Mr. Verd Odom. Opposed: Mr. Charles Midgley, Jr., and Mr. Jason Steen. Vote: 6/2/0. Motion Carried.

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS OR REAPPOINTMENTS TO EXISTING BOARDS

Ms. Lawson made the request for the following boards and appointees:

- Parks & Recreation Demarco Bostic
- Library Board Twanaka Poe
- Planning Commission Judy Fuller
- Zoning Appeals Valerie Love-Bethea

Mr. Steve Blackmon made the request for the following board appoint:

- Library Board Tashia Pearce

Motion made by Dr. Damien Johnson, seconded by Mr. Jason Steen to approve the board appointments made by Ms. Pearly Lawson and Mr. Steve Blackmon. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion Carried.

ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS

NONE.

REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT – MR. WES PARK, FINANCE DIRECTOR

General Fund revenues for the seven months ending January 31, 2023 total \$6,482,394 in comparison to \$6,093,966 for the seven months ending January 31, 2022. General Fund expenditures through January 31, 2023 total \$7,953,527 of a \$13,904,125 budget or 57.20% of budget year to date. General fund expenditures totaled \$6,690,541 for the same seven months ending January 31, 2022. In conclusion revenues are up in comparison to the prior year but not as much as the increase in expenditures.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Ms. Steen asked if we were \$1,000,000 over budgeted. Mr. Park said we were \$600,000 over and it will not get any better before year end. The most significant reason is that normally in previous years with staff openings, we had lower expenditures. The change this year is, we are fully staffed.

Dr. Damien Johnson asked what is the forecast given that staffing has increased to full positions given that we are already \$600,000 over budget. Mr. Park advised we will probably have to use some of the General Fund Reserve to close out the fiscal year. In the approved budget, the expectation was that a reduction in staffing would help and as a result not being able to fill certain staff slots.

Ms. Lawson asked if there was a separate budget for the different teams. Mr. Park advised there is a separate account to manage the \$25 registration fees. She said some of the Commissioners have come to them complaining that they did not have any monies. She wanted to know if they have a budget. It was clarified that it was not the local area commissions. Mr. Munnerylyn advised to simplify things, it all comes out of the same budget. It's the Recreation Director's responsibility to make sure everyone has what they need.

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

EMPLOYEE SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

The following employee was recognized with five or more years of service to Marlboro County through the month of January: Sonya Caulder (5 years); Verd Odom (6 years); Charles P. Midgley, Jr. (6 years); Lisa Herndon (7 years); John Lewis (7 years); Tracy Polson (10 years), Anita Williams (10 years); Jason Steen (12 years); Steve Blackmon (16 years); Anthony Woods (16 years); and Tim Brown (38 years).

ADMINISTRATION

County-wide Clean-up Day 2023

It has been proposed that the County hold a week long clean up initiative culminating with a Saturday event on March 25. Teams will sign up and be assigned certain areas and then will be allowed to complete their work during the week or on that Saturday. If there are no strong objections, staff will put begin planning for the effort.

Budget Process

The Budget process for F&2023-24 will be in the coming weeks first with staff level preparation of current year data and expenditures then followed by solicitation of department level budgets. Once these steps are completed, staff will develop a draft "status quo budget" as in past years, showing what it would cost to continue county operations at their present level, then show know additional expenses and gain or loss of revenue.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Web Site Request for Proposals

A copy of the draft RFP for the development of a new comprehensive County website has been distributed to you. While this could possibly fit under the rules for professional services and not require a RFP process staff feels it is important to advertise so as to hopefully receive an abundance of responses and ideas. Council will in the end approve the winning proposal and may wish to participate in interviews/presentations from the firms responding.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Workforce Meeting

A regular follow-up meeting for Workforce development efforts is scheduled for March 2nd at 10:30 am at the Kinney Room at the MWE Library. The event was originally planned for late February but changed to accommodate key organizations. The meeting will include updates and presentations by NETC, Marlboro County School District and SC Works/SCDEW.

Ms. Lawson asked if the County had received a copy of the American Community Survey, which is very important. It has a 5 year plan for both the County and the City. Per the Bureau of States, Marlboro County only has 307 businesses that are going to participate. She asked if Mr. Park had a chance to call the Bureau of States. Mr. Park responded that the county does not have a responsibility for the survey, but, the businesses. He advised it is a legal requirement for the businesses to fill out the survey.

Ms. Lawson said she did not know how the businesses were selected but she does know that if we do not get the survey in by March 15th, this is how we lose a lot of money. She just wanted to make sure that if it is something the county needs to follow up on, that we do it, because it is very important and the deadline is March 15th.

Mr. Munnerlyn advised we could contact the Chamber of Commerce. He would take care of it.

RECOGNITION OF CITIZEN'S REQUEST BEFORE COUNCIL

Mr. Franklin Smith (American Rescue Act) – said it was the fourth or fifth time he has come. He did some research. The State of South Carolina gave Marlboro County \$6 Million for essential workers and rules. There are plenty of essential workers in the county along with him and the employees of McDonalds. They have never received anything. They are looking forward to getting their money, they worked hard for it. He worked for the County for 6 years and he didn't even get rewarded for those 6 years. He appreciated the respect.

Mr. Demarco Bostic (Obesity) – said he was here to discuss the obesity in the county. There are 26,000+ people in Marlboro County. The statistics are:

- 31 % is overweight Adults
- 36% obesity Adults
- 18% overweight Kids

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

- 21% obesity in kids

He has created a platform to help combat obesity. He has helped 25 people lose 8 to 40 lbs. in 6 to 12 weeks. He has started a kids athletic program who are now physically inclined while reducing the levels of obesity.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (AS NEEDED BY COUNCIL)

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Jason Steen to enter executive session for the discussion of economic and personnel matters. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion Carried.

Motion made by Mr. Verd Odom, seconded by Mr. Jason Steet to leave executive session and re-enter open session. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion Carried.

Chairman Midgley advised no decisions had been made, no votes had been taken.

Chairman Midgley said council had discussed the Administrator's resignation. They discussed asking the Association of Counties to help with the search and replacement with a new Administrator. He asked if there was a motion.

Motion made by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, seconded by Mr. Anthony Woods for the county to request the help of the Association of Counties to help with the search and replacement with a new Administrator. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion Carried.

Mr. Woods asked if the Personnel Director had a job description for Mr. Munnerlyn's position. Ms. Sumpter advised she had separate for the Economic Development Director and the County Administrator's position. She was requested to provide a copy of both to the Council Members.

RECOGNITION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Chairman Midgley advised they would forgo the recognition of Council Members.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Mr. Jason Steen, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, to adjourn the meeting. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion Carried.

February 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 P.M..

(SEAL)

ATTEST:

Adopted: March 14, 2023



Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman
Marlboro County Council



Susan Rivers, Clerk
Marlboro County Council