

MARLBORO COUNTY COUNCIL

MARLBORO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 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 Councilman Charles P. Midgley, Jr. joined the meeting via Zoom.

Others Present: Mr. Doug Carabo, Public Services Director; Ms. Jackie Hough, of the Herald-Advocate; and Mr. Kenneth Stroman, upcoming District 5 Representative pending election on July 14th (observing only and taking no action).

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION – DISCUSSION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONTRACTUAL MATTERS AND POSSIBLE LITIGATION PURSUANT TO SC CODE SECTION 30-4-70

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, stated the Executive Session began at 6:00 pm and no votes or action was taken. Chairman Steen opened the regular meeting at 6:45 pm and stated things were continuing to be handled a little differently due to the concerns of COVID-19.

INVOCATION- Mr. Anthony Woods

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, recommended that the agenda be amended to strike Item 5.a. under Old Business, Ordinance # 789 – an Ordinance to Establish Marlboro County Personnel Policies and Procedures, as well as Item 6.b. under New Business, Resolution # 06-20-02 – a Resolution Approving Budget Amendments to the 2019-2020 Budget, and to add a new Item 6.e. under New Business, Opioid Litigation.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Verd Odom, to approve the amended agenda striking Item 5.a. under Old Business, Ordinance # 789 – an Ordinance to Establish Marlboro County Personnel Policies and Procedures, as well as Item 6.b. under New Business, Resolution # 06-20-02 – a Resolution Approving Budget Amendments to the 2019-2020 Budget, and to add a new Item 6.e. under New Business, Opioid Litigation. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING

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

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated a lot of work had gone into the budget this year. He stated a couple of committee meetings were held with members of Council but he would provide a brief overview of staff's proposed budget for fiscal year 2020-2021.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the General Fund which was the main portion of the budget was estimated at \$12 million. He stated in comparing this year's proposed budget to last year's budget, 66% of all line items remained the same. He also stated that two positions had been eliminated, one in the Tax Assessor's office who resigned and one in Public Works who retired whose primary job was cutting grass. He reminded members of Council that some of the grass cutting had been contracted out which would save the County money in not having to replace the employee and pay benefits. He stated the worker's compensation premium had decreased as well and that would certainly not happen every year but it had certainly helped this year.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the worker's compensation premiums for EMS, Fire Service and Solid Waste were now charged to their own departments and were separate from the General Fund. He stated it was not a bit hit for any of those departments but takes the burden off of general taxes.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated approximately \$1.4 million for the EMS budget comes from taxes and approximately \$1.1 million comes from billing. He stated the County currently pays approximately \$1.1 million to the contractor to handle the billing for EMS.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated with regards to revenue, staff did plan for some decrease from the state based on sales tax concerns. He stated staff did not present a “dooms day” budget after talking with members of Council because it was really hard to tell just how much funding from state would be affected. He stated if funding was drastically decreased by the state that staff may have to revisit and consider making some budget amendments. He stated staff did see some increase from manufacturing depreciation and LOST.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated with regards to expenses, the employer’s portion of the health insurance increased, as well as the state mandated retirement contributions. He stated staff had received budget requests which included a 2% cost of living increase for employees which included costs for a compensation plan adjustment for employees who have taken on additional duties or obtained certifications. He stated staff proposed to provide the cost of living increase in December.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Tax Assessor’s office needed updated software which would provide more accurate information by digitizing information from tax cards and valuations on all properties in the county. He stated the costs would be \$80,000 for the first year. He stated this updated software was much needed and he thanked Mr. Kep Kepley, the Tax Assessor, for his efforts in being able to negotiate the price of the software over a three year period.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff had received a request from the Public Services Director for \$60,000 to be used for additional lease vehicles for the Public Works and Public Buildings Departments. He stated Council chose to lease the vehicles for the Sheriff’s Department and Detention Center and it had proven to be very cost effective. He stated that he has included in the upcoming budget \$30,000 to be used for lease vehicles for Public Works and Public Buildings.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Fire Coordinator had requested that the per-call fee be raised from \$12 per call to \$15 which was more in line with what other counties were paying. He stated this increase was also included in the proposed budget but suggested that a meeting of the Fire Committee be held so that members could be updated on the change in the per-call pay.

Mr. Munnerlyn mentioned the Solid Waste Fund which is now a separate fund from the General Fund. He stated monies were coming in from taxes for roll cart service but that money is paid to the roll cart company with the exception of \$10 towards the costs of operating the convenience centers. Mr. Munnerlyn stated that Mr. Doug Carabo, Public Services Director, has stated the convenience centers were taking in one and a half to two times the normal amount of brown goods from county residents and he has suggested that citizens taking construction debris to the centers be charged a \$50 fee per ton. He stated that this charge should not affect the average citizen who would still be allowed to take items such as refrigerators, couches, mattresses, tires, etc., at no charge.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the bottom line was there was no tax increase in the proposed budget and he was very pleased. He stated for the General Fund, the proposed budget would require \$265,000 to be taken from the reserve fund. (Note: Mr. Munnerlyn misstated the amount needed from the reserve fund to be \$265,000 when in fact the amount needed from reserves is \$455,000.)

June 23, 2020 County Council Meeting

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

ORDINANCE # 796 – AN ORDINANCE TO APPROVE THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR MARLBORO COUNTY FOR THE PERIOD OF FY 2021-2025

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Capital Improvement Plan was included in the agenda packets and was a guideline only and monies for the plan were not included in the budget. He stated it was a type of strategic plan that identified future needs.

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

The Public Hearing was closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 19, 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 May 19, 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 – THIRD READING

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, stated that members of Council had heard the highlights of the budget during the Public Hearing. He recognized Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, to see if there were any additional comments to be made.

Mr. Munnerlyn reiterated that there was no tax increase in the proposed budget.

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

Motion made by Mr. Verd Odom, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to approve the third 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 – THIRD READING

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, stated Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, had previously made comments on this Ordinance and 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 third 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.

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

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the county is required by state law to reassess the properties in the County but staff was allowed to request a one year extension. He stated that the one year extension request was common and much needed this year due to the new software which would be purchased. He stated the software will be a huge help to the Tax Assessor and his staff with the reassessment and he recommended that Council approve the second reading to postpone the reassessment for one year.

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

Motion made by Mr. Willie Gladden, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to approve second 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

RESOLUTION # 06-20-01 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION BY MARLBORO COUNTY TO THE S.C. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE FOR THE FY 2020 LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT (LEMPG) AND AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT GRANT IF AWARDED

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated this was a grant that is applied for each year which helps Mr. Steve Akers in Emergency Management a great deal. He stated the funds were included in the budget.

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 Resolution # 06-20-01 – a Resolution Authorizing Submission of Applications by Marlboro County to the S.C. Emergency Management Office for the FY 2020 Local Emergency Management Performance Grant (LEMPG) and Authorization to Accept Grant if Awarded. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT DONATION OF VACANT LOT NEAR MARKET STREET AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING PARKING LOT FROM VBJ HOLDINGS, LLC

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated there was a very small lot behind the Council on Aging office and Administration office parking lot which VBJ Holdings, LLC would like to donate to the County. He stated if the property was a big lot the county may not want it but since it was so small and in the middle of other properties owned by the County, he suggested that Council authorize staff to accept the lot.

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

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Verd Odom, to approve the acceptance of donation of vacant lot near Market Street and Administration Building Parking Lot from VBJ Holdings, LLC. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

BROADBAND INITIATIVE – CARES GRANT PROPOSAL

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that better broadband internet was one of the strategic initiatives which Council has discussed. He stated he was working to get Marlboro County on the table for some of the CARES Act money from the Governor's office. He stated he has been working with Sandhill Telephone Cooperative and they have a plan to extend fiber infrastructure to areas in the county that have no broadband internet access at this time. He stated it was a very detailed grant but he would be happy to share the plan with members of Council.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the grant would not have any type of match. He stated Marlboro County was the worse county in the state for broadband internet and only 15% of the residences have access to such internet service. He stated that if the grant is awarded, it would be a huge help to all citizens in the county. He stated internet access was a real problem this year when classes were handled virtually. He stated he was excited about this grant and really enjoyed working with Sandhill Telephone Cooperative on the grant proposal.

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 support of Broadband Initiative – CARES Grant proposal. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

Councilman Verd Odom left the meeting for his other job at 7:09 pm.

OPIOID LITIGATION

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that counties have signed up to join in filing opioid lawsuits in state court against pharmaceutical companies who have contributed to the opioid crises, similar to the Tobacco lawsuits, and County Council has been approached to join in on the litigation. Mr. Munnerlyn stated that this matter was discussed in executive session and County Attorney Andrew McLeod and I would recommend that Council authorize Attorney McLeod to make enter into an agreement on our behalf to join the litigation. He stated he was not sure what the end result of the lawsuit might be but we would never know if we are not a part of it.

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

Motion made by Mr. Steve Blackmon, seconded by Mr. Anthony Woods, to authorize County Attorney Andrew McLeod to enter into an agreement on behalf of Marlboro County to join the opioid litigation. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

There were no recommended appointments to boards or commissions.

REPORTS

MARLBORO COUNTY BUILDINGS – UPDATE OF ASSIGNED SPACE OF OFFICE BUILDINGS – MR RON MUNNERLYN, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Munnerlyn mentioned the County Building presentation that was done a while back and how the various buildings were utilized. He stated that during Hurricane Florence, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) had some water seeped into the offices. He stated staff was able to keep it from flooding but staff understands the need for a new and larger area for the emergency personnel to gather in cases of emergencies. Mr. Munnerlyn stated the old Recreation offices on Marlboro Street in the old hospital building were being renovated and he suggested that the offices of Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) be moved to that area. He stated the current DJJ office area could then be renovated for a nice EOC office. He stated he had heard that an active hurricane season was expected. He stated the renovations to the DJJ area for the new EOC offices would be done with FEMA monies in the amount of

June 23, 2020 County Council Meeting

\$40,000 - \$50,000 and the County also had some funds set aside in the budget to help with the renovations. He stated he would seek Council's input with any questions on moving forward with this project.

UPDATE OF PLANNED RECYCLING CENTER – MR. RON MUNNERLYN, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the convenience centers were no longer taking household trash but many citizens have requested a place where they could drop off items without having to lift the items up. He suggested using the old Boro property for the construction of a recycling center with a paved circle drive through where citizens could pull up and drop off items. He also stated that a scale could be at the location for citizens that delivered trailers full of debris. He stated it could be a nice facility with fencing and landscaping and the location would be a central location for all county residents.

Mr. Anthony Woods asked if the facility would be staffed by county employees. Mr. Munnerlyn confirmed that it would be staffed by county employees at all times.

Mr. Jason Steen stated he had some folks ask about this type of facility that would allow them to drop off items rather than requiring them to get out and throw things over into the dumpsters at the current convenience centers.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that funds were included in the current year's budget for this type facility and those funds would be carried over to the new year.

Mr. Willie Gladden stated he thought it was a great idea.

HOSPITAL ALTERNATIVE INITIATIVE UPDATE – MR. RON MUNNERLYN, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that everyone was interested in a hospital or an alternative. He stated the hospital or an alternative was one of the strategic initiatives that he had been working on along with members of Council. He stated there was a hospital task force that met several times that had a study done to show what our county could support. He stated the study was old at this point and needed updating. He suggested writing a letter to the Marlboro County General Hospital Charity Trust requesting that they fund and request an updated study. He stated he spoke with Ms. Jane Rogers, Chairman of the Charity Trust, and she stated she would also be interested in obtaining an updated study. He stated the study would indicate what our county could support and how much money might be needed to support a hospital or an alternative to a hospital. Mr. Munnerlyn stated that the county needed to have some idea whether we could make it happen or not. He stated it would be great if the county had a place where EMS could take citizens rather than having to travel out of town.

FINANCE REPORT

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that due to COVID-19 concerns, he would present the Finance Report on behalf of Ms. Ainsley Moore. He stated that the budget which was reviewed earlier

would serve as the Finance Report. He stated there were no red flags and expenses were being controlled with help from department heads.

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

EMPLOYEE SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

The following employees are recognized with five or more years of service to Marlboro County through the month of May: Deborah Weldon (20 years); Johnny Fair (15 years), Edward Odom (14 years); and Tonya Harmon (15 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.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Delta Site Tour –

Mr. Munnerlyn stated a few Council members and Partnership Board members participated in a tour of the Delta site last week. He stated the tour went very well with about 12 people attending. He also stated that clean-up work had begun on the site.

Prospects for Delta –

Mr. Munnerlyn stated that staff had a site visit and have continued discussions with a new economic development prospect/industry that is very interested in the Delta building.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

COVID-19 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 continuing to limit public access on a case by case basis and utilizing appointments. He 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 the County has provided. He stated with regards to Recreation, the Museums or other public programs, staff continued to review the situation on a weekly basis.

June 23, 2020 County Council Meeting

Mr. Munnerlyn reported the Library was continuing their curbside pickup services for books, DVDs, books on CD and magazines. He stated patrons were 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 stated patrons could also visit palmetto.polarislibrary.com and log in to place a hold their items. He stated after a hold was placed, 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

Ms. Corrie Plato – stated she had no comments.

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr. – commended staff on their work with the budget. He thanked them for all of their hard work.

Mr. Willie Gladden – No comments.

Mr. Steve Blackmon – thanked staff for their hard work on the budget. He thanked them for their efforts in keeping taxes down and the cuts that they were able to make. He stated it meant a lot and that every citizen in the county needed a break.

Mr. Anthony Woods – echoed what Councilman Blackmon stated. He thanked staff for their work with the budget and stated that tough decisions were made. He tipped his hat to the entire staff for their hard work.

Mr. Jason Steen – thanked Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator, and all of staff's hard work with the budget.

Mr. Steen mentioned the Little Free Library Box at Wallace Post Office. He stated books in the library box were free for anyone to take and keep.

Mr. Steen also mentioned work at the Delta site. He stated he was excited about activity taking place and looked forward to the site being very active in the future.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no non-agenda items.

June 23, 2020 County Council Meeting

ADJOURN

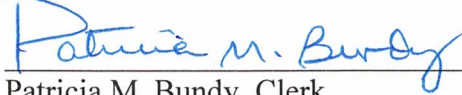
Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, asked if there were any other comments or business. There being none, he adjourned the meeting at 7:21 pm.

(SEAL)

ATTEST:



Jason K. Steen, Chairman
Marlboro County Council



Patricia M. Bundy, Clerk
Marlboro County Council

Adopted: July 14, 2020