

MARLBORO COUNTY COUNCIL
MARLBORO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BUILDING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2022

6:00 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
CORRIE H. PLATO *
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 Public Hearing 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, Advocate prior to the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 6 PM

INVOCATION – Mr. Anthony Woods

EXECUTIVE SESSION (LEGAL MATTERS)

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman advised Council needed to go into executive session for discussion of legal matters.

Motion made by Mr. Verd Odom, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon to enter into executive session for discussion of legal matters. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion Carried.

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Motion made by Mr. Jason Steen, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to leave executive session and re-enter open session. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

The Regular meeting began at 6:15 pm.

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman advised that no action had been taken. Mr. Midgley advised Council needed to add an item to the agenda to authorize legal staff and the County Administrator to enter into a settlement agreement not to exceed \$40,000 with Jay Davis Enterprises, LLC doing business as USA Waste and Recycling with regards to the pending litigation. This will be item 6 b.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, to approve adding item 6 B to the Agenda authorizing legal staff and the County Administrator to enter into a settlement agreement not to exceed \$40,000 with Jay Davis Enterprises, LLC doing business as USA Waste and Recycling with regards to the pending litigation. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, to approve the amended agenda by adding item 6 B. Vote in Favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING

ORDINANCE # 829 – AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND MARLBORO COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES (ORDINANCE # 601), CHAPTER 58 (TAXATION), BY ADDING ARTICLE VI, (SPECIAL PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT PROGRAM FOR REHABILITATED HISTORIC PROPERTIES), TO AUTHORIZE AND ESTABLISH A PROGRAM TO GRANT SPECIAL PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS TO CERTAIN REHABILITATED HISTORIC PROPERTIES.

Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator advised this is only amending a previous ordinance already in place that provided a tax credit to someone who came in and restored property.

Mr. Wes Park, Finance Director discussed briefly advising it is just updating what is already in place and revises the terminology to bring it more up to date. This would require all of the old properties being rehabilitated to meet certain criteria. This is commonly used by cities and other counties.

Mr. Jason Steen asked if this included all the properties throughout Marlboro County. Mr. Park replied Yes.

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ORDINANCE # 831 – AN ORDINANCE TO IMPLEMENT THE REGULATION REGARDING THE DETONATION OF EXPLOSIVE DEVICES IN MARLBORO COUNTY

Mr. Ron Munnerlyn discussed briefly. He said this was brought on by someone in the county exploding tannerite near neighbors home. It includes a lot of rules including being a certain number of feet from public places and requiring neighbors written consent when exploding within a certain distance from their homes. It does include exceptions to include training by the police. A class 3 misdemeanor includes a \$500 fine and 30 day imprisonment. This is the third and final reading.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 9, 2022 – REGULAR MEETING

Motion made by Mr. Jason Steen, seconded by Mr. Verd Odom, to approve the minutes of August 9, 2022 as presented. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

ORDINANCE # 829 – AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND MARLBORO COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES (ORDINANCE # 601), CHAPTER 58 (TAXATION), BY ADDING ARTICLE VI, (SPECIAL PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT PROGRAM FOR REHABILITATED HISTORIC PROPERTIES), TO AUTHORIZE AND ESTABLISH A PROGRAM TO GRANT SPECIAL PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS TO CERTAIN REHABILITATED HISTORIC PROPERTIES. – THIRD READING

Motion made by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, seconded by Mr. Steve Blackmon, to approve third reading of Ordinance # 829 – An Ordinance to amend Marlboro County Code of Ordinances (Ordinance # 601), Chapter 58 (Taxation), By Adding Article VI. (Special Property Tax Assessment Program for Rehabilitated Historic Properties), to authorize and establish a Program to Grant Special Property Tax Assessments to Certain Rehabilitated Historic Properties. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE # 831 – AN ORDINANCE TO IMPLEMENT THE REGULATION REGARDING THE DETONATION OF EXPLOSIVE DEVICES IN MARLBORO COUNTY – THIRD READING

Motion made by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, seconded by Mr. Verd Odom, to approve the third reading of Ordinance # 831 – An Ordinance to implement the regulation regarding the detonation of explosive devices in Marlboro County. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCE # 830 – AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A MUNICIPAL ELECTION TRANSFER AND COSTS FEE AGREEMENT BETWEEN MARLBORO COUNTY AND THE TOWN OF CLIO – FIRST READING (TITLE ONLY)

Mr. Ron Munnerlyn discussed briefly. He had attended an Election Commission meeting in which it was requested that Council consider this agreement. Mr. Munnerlyn advised the county already has an agreement such as this with the Town of McColl. He requested Council approve the first reading by Title only and more details would be provided to Council later.

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Verd Odom, to approve the First Reading of Ordinance # 830 - An Ordinance authorizing the execution of a Municipal Election Transfer and Costs Fee Agreement Between Marlboro County and The Town of Clio. Vote in favor: Unanimous. Motion carried.

AUTHORIZE LEGAL STAFF AND THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO ENTER INTO A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000 WITH JAY DAVIS ENTERPRISES, LLC DOING BUSINESS AS USA WASTE AND RECYCLING WITH REGARDS TO THE PENDING LITIGATION.

Motion made by Mr. Jason Steen, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Stroman, to approve item 6 B - authorizing legal staff and the County Administrator to enter into a settlement agreement not to exceed \$40,000 with Jay Davis Enterprises, LLC doing business as USA Waste and Recycling with regards to the pending litigation. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS (IF APPLICABLE)

NONE.

ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS

NONE.

REPORTS

WORKFORCE MEETING WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT AND NETC BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Ron Munnerlyn discussed briefly. He advised he had attended the meeting along with Council Members: Chairman Midgely, Dr. Johnson, and Mr. Steen. He said he could give his take on the meeting, however, he wanted to know what their thoughts were of the meeting. The meeting was

with the School Board, NETC Board, and some Council members to discuss Vocational Educational needs in Marlboro County. He requested additional information from other council members that attended. Dr. Damien Johnson said he thought it was a productive meeting for a first meeting of what he expects to be many meetings. It should not be just meetings, but also actions. While they had a productive meeting with productive conversation, he believed Council should take the lead to make sure those conversations turn into actions. Training will be very important. The county gave the old Winn Dixie building to NETC and need to make sure it is being used for the purpose of what it was given to them for. They need to make sure we have a ready workforce with updated skills and training so the county can entice and attract more new jobs to the area. Dr. Johnson said he was pleased with the first meeting, however, he will be more pleased when there is more action to bring the jobs. Mr. Munnerlyn agreed with Dr. Johnson stating that it was a good meeting, however, general, because of the people there. He said the desire is to create a Vocational Training program that begins with Junior High and go all the way through High School. One thing that presented itself for an opportunity in Marlboro County, is the shortage of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) in both Marlboro County and surrounding counties. With NETC an Eighteen year old who is inclined to follow in this career choice and not prohibited by anything from their past, could take a 6 month class, take an exam, pass, and get a job making \$35,000 per year. Mr. Jason Steen advised he had attended the meeting and thought it had good representation for a first meeting. He also agreed that the county must take the lead and put a foundation under it. He thought there was a small disconnect in which everyone needed to get together and work together.

FINANCE REPORT – MR. WES PARK, FINANCE DIRECTOR

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman, recognized Mr. Wes Park, Finance Director, for his report.

Mr. Wes Park, Finance Director, advised the General fund revenues for the two months ending August 31, 2022 total \$1,273,682 in comparison to \$1,080,623 for the two months ending August 31, 2021. General fund expenditures total \$2,205,914 of a \$13,854,125 budgeted through the month of August 31, 2022 compared to the total of \$1,860,627 for the same two months ending August 31, 2021. In conclusion revenues are up in comparison to the prior year but not as significant as the increase in expenditures. One of the differences is the county had a lot more vacancies in the first two months of 2021 than they do for 2022.

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

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman, recognized Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, County Administrator to present his report.

EMPLOYEE SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

The following employees were recognized with five or more years of service to Marlboro County through the month of August: Patricia English (14 years); Sharon Wilson (22 years); Janilla

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Williams (16 years); Robin O'Tuel (10 years); Jeremy Steen (13 years); Darryl Johnson (5 years); and Gregory Leviner (9 years).

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mohawk Workforce Job Fair – Marlboro County with the help of various agencies held two job fairs on August 30th and Thursday, September 1st at the Blenheim gym for the employees being displaced by the closure of Mohawk Industries. More than 500 employees participated over the 2 days and more than 50 employers were represented. A team of Marlboro County Government employees worked hard to organize and serve lunch each day, set up the gym and even remodeled an empty classroom for the event. PDRTA ran a bus shuttle between Mohawk and the site. SC Department of Employment and Workforce managed registration for the event and the Pee Dee COG workforce groups assisted employees with their resumes. They did an excellent job.

Community-wide Job Fair - The Mohawk event was limited to only Mohawk workers. The Workforce Committee of the MC Economic Development Partnership and others including County Government are planning a community-wide event of October 5th. The event will be open to anyone in search of a job and will be held at the Bennettsville Community Center on Marlboro Street. More information in the coming days will be sent out.

Recreation - Staff requests a work session on or before the next regular council meeting. Staff will have details on several options being discussed including potential aquatics facilities near Lake Paul Wallace and the golf course property. Councilman Stroman and I met with Lake Authority Chairman Sully Blair and have sent a request to Chairman Blair to discuss options regarding location of aquatics facilities on or adjacent to state-owned lake property. Finance Director Park and I are meeting with the owners of the golf course to discuss information that will allow us to finalize budgets and other information to be used in evaluating that possible acquisition. Mr. Kenneth Stroman advised he has people ready to proceed.

Presentation to S.C. Department of Commerce staff - I traveled to Columbia yesterday to meet with the staff of the S.C. Department of Commerce. My presentations focused on the impact of the recent Mohawk closure and the issues of workforce, amenities and image that we struggle with in attracting and retain industry. I presented the recently completed Spec Building and the Delta site. The reaction was positive both as a group and by individuals after the meeting. There were approximately 20/30 people present.

Industry Appreciation Day Golf Tournament – will be held October 14th beginning with Breakfast. Additional information will be sent out. The focus will be on Industry and businesses that support industry.

Mr. Verd Odom asked Mr. Munnerlyn to address the rumors going around concerning SoPakco. Mr. Munnerlyn stated he had spoken with Mr. Lonnie Thompson (Sopakco) about the rumors. Mr.

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Thompson said they were discussing expansion, however, no decisions have been made. Mr. Thompson advised Mr. Munnerlyn that if any decisions were made, he would let him know.

RECOGNITION OF CITIZEN'S REQUEST BEFORE COUNCIL

Mr. Charles Midgley, Chairman explained the rules for citizen's addressing council. He advised they would be allowed a time limit of 3 minutes; they could not defer their time to another person; they were only allowed to speak of the topic they signed up to speak of; this is not a time for questions and answers - council would not respond, and attacking of any one individual is not permitted.

Mr. Jack Logan (Hot Spot) – Founder of “Put Down the Guns Now Young People” Organization from Greenville, SC. Mr. Logan stated that his organization is a National Organization partnered with Project Child Safe. He had been contacted by the mother (Tonya Ingram) of the young lady killed July 27, 2022 three weeks previously. He immediately came to Marlboro County and met with her and the children. He was disturbed that the business opened the next day after the shooting. He said he understood there is no law or ordinance against that. However, he did not stop there. His organization protests. They look to see if the night clubs are in compliance with every law set up to govern them. On July 27, 2022 and as of the previous day, he had been advised by SLED Agent, Joe West, the Hot Spot Club did not and does not have an Alcohol License. SLED will start a criminal probe with the Bennettsville Police Department and the Marlboro County Sheriff's Department. He said he could not say that the young lady would not have been killed, however, alcohol and guns do not mix. Mr. Logan said there was another young lady present at the meeting whose father had been killed at a night club in Marlboro County 30 years previously. He requested Council look at creating an Ordinance for any night club in Marlboro County which does not allow guns in night clubs or on the property. He wants the young people to be able to go out and have a good time, but, not to take guns with them. He also said that when he came to Marlboro County, the Victim's Advocate with the Sheriff's Department had not reached out to Ms. Ingram. He advised her who to contact, which she has, and she is now getting help. He has also spoken with Sheriff McNeil about the situation.

Ms. Donna Ridges (Strategic Plan) – advised she had looked at the strategic plans for 2019 and 2020. It was now 2022 without any updates. The strategic plans had a lot of Covid related things in them. The Federal Government has now relaxed all of their Covid limitations. She requested Council hold a work session to update the strategic plan based on the current economic situation. She asked Council members to hold an open forum with their constituents to find out what the people need. The people want to help. Everyone needs to work together collectively.

Ms. Yasmine Garcia (Violence) – she wanted Council to create an Ordinance on Gun Violence. Her father had been murdered in 1993 (30 years ago) at a night club. She wanted the leaders to understand that only Security Guards with proper concealed weapon and law enforcement training should be allowed to have guns at the night clubs.

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Mr. M. Travis Bragg, Warden (Detention Center) – thanked Council for the salary adjustments and hires since. He advised he only needed one more employee. He advised he has previously held the position of Warden at FCI Bennettsville where he served for 8 years. He has been a Warden for 13 ½ years and spoke of his experience in the prison system.

Warden Bragg spoke of the security issues at the Jail which needed to be corrected and updated. The funds that are needed are not in his budget. He advised of 4 staff members who were attacked at the Detention Center the previous weekend by inmates. All required medical attention of which 2 required worker's compensation. After reviewing the cell doors, he recognized they do not have the correct locks on the doors. The cell doors are not locking properly. This requires immediate attention. One inmate with murder charges opened the cell door with a coffee cup lid. The employees are working in a dangerous situation.

Warden Bragg invited all Council Members to come and tour the Detention Center. He said in order for them to make decisions, they need to see the conditions for themselves. He said he realized money is an issue, but, he needs help.

Mr. Franklin Smith (American Rescue Funds) – said this was the 3rd time he had come to speak with Council about the American Rescue Funds. He said he worked for the recreation department for 11 years and was laid off when the pandemic came through. The funds were distributed the following year. He felt he should have received part of the funds.

RECOGNITION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman recognized each Council Member.

Mr. Verd Odom – said he continues to keep the Mohawk employees in his thoughts. He went to both of the job fairs for the employees and said the county employees were well organized. The Mohawk employees were pleased with the event. He asked everyone to continue to pray for the people out of work, law enforcement, and first responders.

Mr. Steve Blackmon – asked for prayer for all of the victims. He knew something needed to be done. Both job fairs were a success. He hopes everyone get's back on their feet. He knows it is a tough situation right now, but, council is working on it.

Dr. Damien Johnson – expressed his condolences to the victims. He thanked Ms. Ridges for her feedback. It is important for they to engage with their citizens. He was only one person, but, he was optimistic. Council did not want to step over anyone of the other leaders of the community, they want to work with them. There is a ready workforce that does not just want jobs, they want careers. The county needs to think outside the box. There are too many people leaving the county. He has been encouraged by the last week and a half in moving forward now. He thanked the Warden for bringing the situation to their attention and said the county needs to work on providing a safer working condition for these employees.

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Mr. Jason Steen - he expressed his condolences for the losses. He thanked Mr. Logan for coming to Marlboro County. He advised that training had worked in previous years for getting workers for the Fire Departments through High School programs. Hopefully, it will work with getting EMTs. He noted that the Delta 2 plant is almost down.

Mr. Kenneth Stroman – addressed Ms. Ingram in saying he could not even consider losing his daughter. He questioned who was in control of the night clubs. He asked for an update on the vests and computers for the Sheriff's department. He knew there was a disconnect, just need to get the vests for them. Mr. Stroman did not want to point blame at anyone, however, the Sheriff's Department should not have to jump through hoops to purchase what has been approved by Council. If Council needs to have more called meetings to get things done, they need to have them.

Mr. Anthony Woods – addressed Mr. Logan. Mr. Woods said he had a daughter and knows how the young woman's mother feels. He said that the principal of Marlboro County High School, the Head Football Coach of Marlboro County High, the new Basketball Coach of Marlboro County High all played under the Marlboro County Parks and Recreation Program. They all left, but, they all came back to make a difference because they know what Marlboro County means to them. They know how to reach the children. A lot of people do leave, but, they do come back because this is home. He said the county needs to go back in time. Years ago, they used to have town meetings in the various areas. Council does not know what the people want, unless the people tell them. They need dialogue. He has been on council since 2006. Every area needs to grow, not just Bennettsville. For Marlboro County to grow, every area must grow. The situation with alcohol and guns is bad right now. The situation needs to be addressed.

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., Chairman – addressed Mr. Logan, Ms. Garcia, Ms. Ingram, and Ms. Ridges. He wished Mr. Logan the best in his endeavors with working with the youth. He Gave his condolences to Ms. Garcia and Ms. Ingram in their loss. He told Ms. Ridges he looked forward to walking around the community with her.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Mr. Verd Odom, seconded by Ms. Steve Blackmon, to adjourn the meeting. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

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(SEAL)

ATTEST:

Adopted: October 18, 2022



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



Susan Rivers, Clerk
Marlboro County Council