

MARLBORO COUNTY COUNCIL

MARLBORO CIVIC CENTER

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 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.
KENNETH STROMAN
STEVE BLACKMON, AND

WILLIE GLADDEN,
CORRIE H. PLATO,
VERD ODOM,
ANTHONY WOODS

*

* Absent

The Council meeting is being held at the Marlboro Civic Center in order to allow adequate space for an open meeting and to allow for social distancing.

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

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.marlborocounty.sc.gov).

INVOCATION- Mr. Anthony Woods

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion made by Mr. Willie Gladden, seconded by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., to approve the agenda as presented. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS

UPDATE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS FOR THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD – MS. JOETTE DUKES

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, stated that Ms. Joette Dukes could not attend the meeting due to sickness and stated that Ms. Mamie Legette would be making the presentation tonight on behalf of Ms. Dukes. He recognized Ms. Legette.

Ms. Legette thanked members of Council for allowing her to make comments on the proposed Local and Regional Plans for the State Workforce Development Board. She stated she served as the Workforce System Coordinator for the Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments. She thanked members of Council for their support of the Pee Dee COG and their appointment of engaged, qualified members to the Pee Dee Workforce Development Board. She stated the current workforce board members from Marlboro County were Rena McLain, who currently serves as Vice Chair, and Sam Bass with the Chesterfield-Marlboro EOC.

Ms. Legette stated that the SC Works Pee Dee was the most visible initiative of the Pee Dee Workforce Board. She stated the SC Works Bennettsville Center was located on Hwy 9 where various partners of SC's public workforce system work together to assist individuals in the community to become employed. She stated a few of SC Works partners included Eckerd Connects, SC Vocational Rehabilitation, SC Commission of the Blind, SC Department of Employment and Workforce, Marlboro County Adult Education, SCDSS, NETC, Chesterfield-Marlboro EOC. She stated Ms. Dolores Laney was the site manager at the Bennettsville Center. She stated during the COVID-19 epidemic, the center was open three days a week by appointment only and has transitioned many of their services to a virtual platform. She stated they were also utilizing social media (Facebook and Twitter) to communicate with the public. She stated information was shared on a daily basis about job opportunities, training programs and skills development programs.

Ms. Legette stated programs available at the SC Works Centers were all under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). She stated legislation requires workforce staff at the Pee Dee COG, every four years to produce two documents, a Local Plan and a Regional Plan. She stated the purpose of the plans was to describe how the Pee Dee Workforce Development Board (PDWDB), appointed by the six Pee Dee county councils, would develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies with those that support the State Workforce Board's strategic and operational goals for workforce programs in South Carolina. She stated the Regional Plan required them to coordinate with neighboring workforce programs in Santee Lynches Region, including Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee, and Sumter Counties and three counties in the Waccamaw Local Workforce Development Area (Georgetown, Horry, and Williamsburg Counties) for a total of 13 counties along the northeastern quadrant of the state. She stated legislation also requires that they receive the written support of all of the county councils in our region.

Ms. Legette provided a few highlights that were included in the Plans which have been provided to the County Administrator's office via email. Ms. Legette invited members of Council to offer their support of workforce programs in Marlboro County. The highlights were as follows:

- During COVID, the SC Works Center upgraded its services so that they could be provided virtually. She stated they closed for a few months but have assisted about 207 individuals since reopening.
- Through the public workforce system, partners work well together to make the SC Works system effective for the unemployed and underemployed, particularly for those with barriers to employment, i.e., basic skills deficient, homeless, offenders, disconnected youth, low income, etc. She mentioned that Veterans were provided priority in service in the centers, as they should be.
- The Healthcare sector was the largest in-demand industry sector in the region(s) and the public workforce system was engaging the employers in that sector in various ways, i.e. the establishment of the Greater Pee Dee Region Healthcare Partnership, job fairs, hiring events, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, etc.
- Six of the top 20 largest employers in the larger regions were in the Healthcare sector, including McLeod Regional Medical Center and Medical University of South Carolina Hospital Authority in the Pee Dee Local Area.
- Between October 2020, and March 2021, the Pee Dee Workforce Development Board will undergo an extensive strategic planning effort to be led by Brianna L. Dennis, Executive Director, Kelley Center for Economic Development, Francis Marion University, with special expertise provided by Jeffrey DeLung, Director of Research and Special Projects, North Eastern Strategic Alliance (NESA). She stated the resulting Strategic Plan would be shared with each county council. She stated members of Economic Development in each county were invited to participate, but also welcomed members of Council to take part if interested.
- The Pee Dee Workforce Development Board was supportive of Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and various partners in working with local communities in the Pee Dee to provide access to community resources and employment opportunities. Lack of transportation remains a significant barrier to employment in the Pee Dee. She stated they were pleased to support PDRTA's expansion of transportation services to the worthy citizens of Marlboro County over the past year.
- Through WIOA programs, the Board was attempting to address the needs of employers in the area. She stated many of them have said that the individuals being hired were lacking soft skills. She stated according to the most recent Online Job postings by local employers, the Top 5 soft skills desired of employees were: Communication (Verbal & written skills); Customer Service; Teamwork; Ability to work Independently/Self Motivated; and Flexibility. She stated the Board has identified several tools they will use to address these deficiencies and would make the development of soft skills a priority for the period 2020-2024.

- Ms. Legette stated the Board was very pleased with the results that their Integrated Business Services Team was achieving in the Region. She stated team members reach out to employers, economic development and local chambers to be involved in the economic development of the area. She stated the Board could offer on-the-job (OJT) training, Incumbent Worker Training funds and if needed, rapid response services to help individuals that were affected by layoffs and closures, to be reemployed. She stated the Board was also pleased to promote job opportunities, screen applicants, provide employer events and Job Fairs with various workforce partners.

Ms. Legette stated there were so many other activities that the Board was privileged to be involved in through WIOA. She stated they appreciated the support of Marlboro County Council. She requested a motion by Marlboro County Council to approve the Local and Regional Plans that have been developed in the best interest of the citizens of the Pee Dee Region.

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

Chairman Steen thanked Ms. Legette for her presentation and for all their Board does for Marlboro County.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

AUGUST 11, 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 Ms. Corrie Plato, to approve the Regular Council meeting minutes from August 11, 2020 as presented. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCE # 799 – AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE AGREEMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTI-COUNTY INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS PARK BY AND BETWEEN DARLINGTON COUNTY AND MARLBORO COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A JOINTLY OWNED AND OPERATED INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK SO AS TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL PROPERTY IN DARLINGTON COUNTY AS PART OF THE JOINT COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARK, AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO – FIRST READING

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the Ordinance being considered was a standard legal requirement to provide incentives to Darlington County which has a higher tier than Marlboro County. He stated the Darlington/Marlboro Industrial Park agreement had been in place for about 20-25 years. He stated he was hopeful that Marlboro County would be in a position to request this same type arrangement for incentives from Darlington County in the near future.

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

Motion made by Mr. Anthony Woods, seconded by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., to approve first reading of Ordinance # 799 – an Ordinance to Amend the Agreement for Development of a Multi-County Industrial and Business Park by and between Darlington County and Marlboro County, South Carolina, Providing for the Development of a Jointly Owned and Operated Industrial/Business Park so as to Include Additional Property in Darlington County as Part of the Joint County Industrial Park, and Other Matters Relating Thereto. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE PEE DEE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS PLANS FOR WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, stated that Ms. Mamie Legette had made a presentation on these plans earlier. He asked if there were any questions or concerns. There were none.

Motion made by Ms. Corrie Plato, seconded by Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr., to approve the Local and Regional Plans presented by the Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments Plans for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION OF RENTAL OF COUNTY PROPERTY

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

Mr. Munnerlyn stated sometime back staff was granted authority to rent property at Boro for a term of six months or less in order to generate rental funds for the County. He stated there was space now available at the Delta site that could be available for storage in exchange for rental income. He asked members of Council to consider extending that same authority to allow rental of portions of the Delta site property in exchange for rental payments. He stated the law requires that leases have three readings and a public hearing but asked that staff be authorized to rent portions of the Delta site for a term of no more than six months in exchange for a rental payment.

September 8, 2020 County Council Meeting

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 authorize staff to enter into negotiations for short term rental of no more than six months of the Delta site property in exchange for rental payments. Vote in favor. Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

There were no recommended appointments to Boards and Commissions.

REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT – MR. WES PARK

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman recognized Mr. Wes Park for the Finance Report.

Mr. Park stated that the General fund revenues through August 31, 2020 totaled \$475,150. He stated the General fund expenses through August 31, 2020 totaled \$1,998,714 of a \$12,038,883 budget or 16.59% of budget year to date. He stated as of August 31, 2020, the County has \$3,390,404 in the three general fund operating accounts.

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

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 August: Susan Rivers (20 years); Patricia English (12 years); Sharon Wilson (20 years); Glendora Johnson (8 years); Janilla Williams (14 years); Robin O’Tuel (8 years); Sara Albarri (6 years); Jeremy Steen (11 years); Benetrice Ferguson (22 years); Greg Leviner (7 years); and Steve Akers (22 years).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lunch provided at the Community Kitchen – Mr. Munnerlyn stated Marlboro County would provide lunch at the Community Kitchen tomorrow. He stated Ms. Bobbie Grooms would be leading the group and the menu included BBQ sliders, chips, applesauce and cookies. He reminded everyone that plates would be provided for take-out only.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Prospect Inquires - Mr. Munnerlyn stated prospect inquiries, and what were viewed as active prospects, were at a standstill.

Broadband initiative - Mr. Munnerlyn stated the CARES Act broadband project was

ongoing and he hoped to have an update in the next week. He stated there had been a great deal of inquiries as to exactly where the service would be extended and staff was hopeful that information could be shared soon. He stated the timeline created by the state, mandates that all work be completed by mid-December. He stated the timeline may restrict what could be done here and in other counties, unless it could be extended. He stated once staff has an idea of the areas added by the program, the original plan could be revised and staff would seek funding for other areas in the county.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Hospital Initiative - Mr. Munnerlyn reminded everyone that the Marlboro General Hospital Charities Trust approved staff's request for a new study to determine what our community needs were and what we might be able to support with regards to a hospital or alternative. He stated the study was underway and he looked forward to its findings. He stated changes in state laws were key in getting a hospital or alternative here. He stated so far there has been no luck in that regard.

COVID Testing - Mr. Munnerlyn stated staff continues to support additional testing with the MWE Library being used as a site. He expressed concerns that testing events were being used as campaign events by some local politicians and stipulated that county facilities would only allow testing with no politicians hanging around. He stated testing was a private, personal health situation and citizens should not have to deal with politicians or others.

Rural Fire Strategic Plan - Mr. Munnerlyn stated Chairman Steen, Fire Coordinator Keith Hughes and himself met with the fire chiefs of the rural departments to discuss strategic planning for the fire service. He stated the ISO study and Plan developed almost 10 years ago has been a great road map for making improvements that have resulted in safer conditions and in some cases reductions in fire insurance premiums. He stated the Fire Departments should be commended for their hard work; but stated it was now time to develop a plan for the next 10 years. He stated staff along with the chiefs and the Fire Committee appointed by Council would begin working on a plan in the next few months.

Mr. Munnerlyn stated the \$20,000 requests per department for end of last year large expenses were being processed through the County's procurement policy. He stated the departments would get reimbursed for up to \$20,000 in documented extra expenditures or vendors would be paid directly by the County.

RECOGNITION OF CITIZEN'S REQUEST BEFORE COUNCIL

Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, stated that no citizens had signed up to address members of Council.

RECOGNITION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Verd Odom – stated everything was quiet but folks were getting busy in planning for the election scheduled for November 3rd. He stated early voting would begin on September 29th and requested mail ballots would begin going out the 1st week in October. He stated the

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Governor's Emergency Order in place would allow for anyone to vote absentee and eliminate the need for folks to have a specific reason to do so as in the past. He encouraged everyone to please vote. He stated there was only a 26% turnout in the Marlboro County election in June and Horry County only had 16% participate.

Mr. Odom mentioned the school supply giveaway event which Congressman Tom Rice sponsored over the weekend and stated it went very well and was much appreciated.

Mr. Steve Blackmon – No comments.

Mr. Willie Gladden – mentioned the Census and asked that everyone please participate and complete their census forms and get them in the mail as soon as possible.

Mr. Gladden also mentioned that a lot was going in Marlboro County and the election was coming up in November. He stated some things would be coming out from folks individually but asked that folks keep in mind that these things were not coming from County Council.

Mr. Charles P. Midgley, Jr. – No comments.

Ms. Corrie Plato – No Comments.

Mr. Anthony Woods – thanked Ms. Jackie Hough and the Herald-Advocate for the article in the paper regarding his grandmother's 104th birthday. He stated she really appreciated their taking the time to interview her and it made her birthday even more special. He stated the family had a drive-thru parade and had a great response from folks all over the County and especially the Town of Clio.

Mr. Woods encouraged everyone to vote in the upcoming election. He stated the election was critical on both the local and national level.

Mr. Jason Steen – mentioned the Broadband Initiative and stated he was very happy about the news confirming the grants being awarded to Marlboro County in an amount of \$1.5 million. He stated that Sandhill Telephone Cooperative was partnering with the County on this project but Sandhill had also stated their intention of branching out to even more areas in the County. He stated every area that could be provided broadband internet service to would help them and the entire county. He stated this was much needed especially with the schools needing internet for virtual learning. He stated it was very important because the future was very uncertain as to what the schools will be doing next year. He stated it may be that schools would be required to go completely virtual by next year, that things were all uncertain.

Mr. Steen mentioned the Hospital alternative. He stated the old report confirmed that Marlboro County could not sustain a hospital. He stated the population in the county has decreased and continues to decrease. He stated he looked forward to receiving an updated study.

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Mr. Steen thanked Sheriff Lemon and his Chief Deputy for attending the meeting and for all they do for the county. He also thanked the Acting Finance Director, Mr. Wes Park, and County Administrator and Economic Developer, Mr. Ron Munnerlyn, and the entire staff for all of their hard work.

Sheriff Charles Lemon – stated that he has listened to everyone tonight. He asked everyone to vote and thanked everyone for their support.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

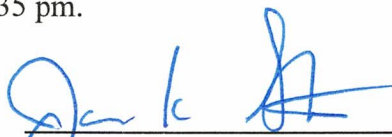
There were no non-agenda items.

ADJOURN

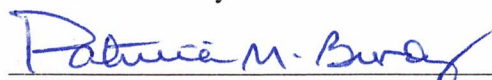
Mr. Jason Steen, Chairman, asked if there were any other comments or business. There being none, he adjourned the meeting at 6:35 pm.

(SEAL)

ATTEST:



Jason K. Steen, Chairman
Marlboro County Council



Patricia M. Bundy, Clerk
Marlboro County Council

Adopted: October 13, 2020