



JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL

VIRTUAL MEETING

Jasper County Clementa C. Pinckney Government Bldg
358 3rd Avenue Ridgeland, SC 29936

MARCH 15, 2021

MINUTES

Officials Present for the Workshop: Chairwoman Barbara B. Clark, Vice Chairman Dr. Curtis Brantley, Councilman Pastor Alvin Adkins, Councilman John Kemp and Coroner Willie Aiken.

Staff Present for the Workshop: County Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Clerk to Council Wanda H. Simmons, County Attorney David Tedder, Administrative Services Director Kimberly Burgess, Dallas Lassiter, Olan Roberts and Jonathan Dunham.

The 4pm workshop with County Council and County Coroner was called to order.

Chairwoman Clark noted that this workshop was to discuss with the current and address the current Coroner's situation. She asked County Administrator, Mr. Fulghum to start the discussion.

Mr. Fulghum started with a brief update of the physical space of the Coroner's office. He invited Ms. Dallas Lassiter and Mr. Olan Roberts of the Engineering Services Dept. to provide an update.

Ms. Lassiter noted that the building had been cleaned by Superior Services completing the mold and mildew removal. The bathroom had been transformed the bathroom to the ADA bathroom. She said that a viewing window had been cut in, the container has been put in and rugs had been purchased. She said that all of the work requested from Engineering Services had been completed. Mr. Fulghum asked about the phone line and fax line from the IT Dept. to be installed. Coroner Aiken said that a workorder had been put in and scheduled. Coroner Aiken also asked about a partition to divide the office and Ms. Lassiter noted that they may have some items at the Clemson Building that he may want to look at.

Mr. Fulghum noted that they had received Coroner Aiken's 2021-2022 budget and that when budget workshops began, he would be able to discuss his views for the department and noted that staff needed some direction on policy issues.

Chairwoman Clark said she would like to start with the County purchased van. She said the van was purchased as a Coroner's van for his use and that only county officials could drive the van. Mr. Fulghum noted that he thought Mr. Aiken was looking for mileage reimbursement from the time he took over till the van was purchased. Chairwoman Clark said there was no problem with that, however, from the time the van was purchased forward there would be no need for reimbursement. Coroner Aiken stated that he had requested a vehicle to handle Coroner business and to be able to take meetings with people, since the van was generally used to pick up bodies. He noted further that the mileage would

come into play if he had to go to the scene in his personal vehicle. He said that if he had to go to the scene in his personal vehicle that this is when he would charge mileage.

Mrs. Burgess noted that the County had a policy where everyone submits for what the IRS allows for as mileage charges and that mileage is only reimbursed outside of the County as this is how the Employee Manual lists it.

Chairwoman Clark asked Attorney David Tedder to find out the mileage requirements for Elected Officials if we provide a vehicle for staff. Councilman Dr. Brantley asked if we would be paying him what other counties pay their Coroner. Chairwoman Clark noted that the County cannot pay for example what counties such as Beaufort County may be able to pay.

Mr. Fulghum discussed the fact that staff was trying to get some direction. Ms. Burgess noted that the IRS rate for 2021 was \$.56 a mile. Chairwoman Clark did clarify that the use of a personal car will not allow a person to be covered by County Insurance. Coroner Aiken said that he was aware of that requirement.

Councilman Adkins asked if Coroner Aiken was in Georgia for example, if he was being expected to come back, get the van and go to the scene. Chairwoman Clark said that there was a Deputy Coroner and he can have up to 2 Deputy Coroners. Coroner Aiken noted that he is trying to go to all calls himself, but would be starting a new rotation soon. He noted that he does have a transport company and it just requires a Coroner for the pronouncing.

Coroner Aiken noted that in the new budget he had requested a vehicle. A discussion amongst Council ensued regarding the transport company, a van for transport and a drive around vehicle. Additionally, Chairwoman Clark said that Coroner Aiken also asked for an Administrative Secretary at a cost of \$600 per week. She noted this would be a new position and would have to go into the budget. Coroner Aiken said that should have been \$300 per week and \$600 every two weeks. Chairwoman Clark mentioned that since he had 2 Deputy Coroners budgeted that maybe one of those salaries could be used. Ms. Burgess noted that staff had received invoices for overtime for the Administrative Assistant who worked at the funeral home for their services to the County and noted that staff needed direction on that. Councilman Dr. Brantley noted that he thought the purpose of the workshop, he felt that Council needed to comply with what the Coroner needed to do the job. Chairwoman Clark asked if he could hold off until the budget year since he had the Deputy Coroner. Coroner Aiken said that he is getting backed up on paperwork, and said he even has Highway Patrol asking for paperwork from last year. He noted that he needed an Administrative Assistant to help with the workload. Chairwoman Clark asked how many deaths had been recorded since he had taken office. Coroner Aiken said he would have to check on the total.

Councilman Kemp stated (going back to the Administrative Assistant) position, the position would have to be advertised, and the person would have to apply for the position. Mr. Fulghum said that was correct. He said they would have to create a position, create a job description for the position, and then advertise and take applications. It was discussed whether or not the Coroner could pay for the Administrative Assistant position as a contractual position. Ms. Burgess noted that the County could

reimburse the \$300 a week as a contractual service. It was discussed how could this position be paid for from the budget on a temporary basis. It was decided to pay this as a contractual service.

The discussion turned to postmortems and the charges associated with that. It was discussed that the van was generally used for local transportation but not to transport to USMC. Coroner Aiken noted that he was using the same charges chart that the previous Coroner had charged. Keeping all Councilmembers advised equally and have them on the same page was discussed, as well as if a Councilmember has prior knowledge that a vote cannot be cast from that Councilmember. Councilman Kemp noted that a Contract should never be done without the knowledge of Council. He noted that there were only certain staff, primarily Mr. Fulghum could sign contracts for the County and possibly someone in his absence if that was approved. Mr. Fulghum asked if there were any contracts with any of the transport companies? He said if so a copy would be very helpful to know more about the companies and the agreement. Ms. Burgess said they have paid the bills they had. She also noted that copies of the contracts were needed for the files and any other bills they may have.

Councilman Kemp asked if it was a relationship or a contract agreement. Coroner Aiken said he thought it was a relationship because he was not aware of a contract. Ms. Burgess also noted the request to reimburse for the lights on the personal vehicle. Coroner Aiken noted that for the personal vehicle he thought the cost was \$350 but that he could confirm. He said the lights were put on the vehicle prior to the van's arrival. Mr. Fulghum said they may be precluded on paying for that, so they would get with Mr. Tedder.

Coroner Aiken gave a brief synopsis of the Jasper County Coroner's office and their certifications. He spoke of how the operations are running and upcoming educational trainings that he would like their office to attend. He noted that he desired to help the county be as progressive as other counties and thanked Council for their help. The workshop concluded.

Council Meeting:

Officials Present: Chairwoman Barbara B. Clark, Councilman Dr. Curtis Brantley, Councilman L. Martin Sauls, Councilman Pastor Alvin Adkins and Councilman John Kemp.

Staff Present: County Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Clerk to Council Wanda H. Simmons, County Attorney David Tedder, Administrative Services Director Kimberly Burgess, Emergency Services Director Chief Russell Wells, Danny Lucas of Development Services for Jasper County and Acting Airport Manager, Lisa Wagner Director of Planning and Building, and Jonathan Dunham.

Others Present for Executive Session: Mr. Walt. Cartin

Call to Order: Chairwoman Clark called the meeting to order at approximately 5:40 PM. Clerk of County Council, Wanda Simmons read the report of compliance with the Freedom of Information Act for the record.

Chairwoman Clark read the information below for the executive session and asked for a motion to go into executive session.

Executive Session

SECTION 30-4-70. Meetings which may be closed; procedure; circumvention of chapter; disruption of meeting; executive sessions of General Assembly.

(a) A public body may hold a meeting closed to the public for one or more of the following reasons:

(2) Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contract arrangements and proposed purchase or sale of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice related to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim – Sections 30-4-70(a)(2) - [Exit 3](#); [MCIP](#); [East Argent MID/Municipal Tax Collections](#)

(5) Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by a public body -- Section 30-4-70(a)(5) – [Jasper Ocean Terminal \(JOT\)](#); [Sherwood Tract](#)

Motion to go into Executive Session: Councilman Adkins

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Return to Open Session:

Motion to go return to regular session: Councilman Kemp

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Business from Executive Session:

Motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement relating to the Communication Tower with the City of Hardeeville as discussed in Executive Session: Councilman Kemp

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Dr. Brantley and Councilman Adkins gave the invocation.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to go approve the agenda: Councilman Dr. Brantley

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Approval of the Minutes February 23, 2021:

Motion to approve the minutes of February 23, 2021: Councilman Dr. Brantley

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Presentations:

A: Presentation by Ms. Jackie O'Bannon will be speaking on the "Getting To Work" Project.

Ms. Jackie O'Bannon was present to discuss the "Getting To Work" Project. She noted this was a new project to get residents to work in the Hilton Head and Bluffton areas. She noted this is a two-year project and the buses would be running initially on Monday through Friday from 5:30 AM to 9:30 PM. Antioch Express will be the name on the buses. They are targeting three groups of Jasper County residents: 1st group is made up of people that can walk to their office to catch the bus; 2nd group are one car families; and the 3rd group of people may have a car, but the car may not be able to carry them back and forth to work. She noted that everyone will leave from Antioch Express and there are two stops in Jasper County. She noted that buses are for work only and the two stops in Jasper County will be at Coastal Carolina and at Walmart. Each of the two current buses will make two trips and fares will be \$5 per person to ride the bus, however the first three months there will be no fare to ride the bus at all. She noted that income verifications will be performed for people wanting to ride the bus for free based on household income. She noted that they plan to kick off the project in May with a maiden voyage on May 4th, 2021. She noted that the County Council of Jasper County, the Hardeeville Council, Bluffton Council and Beaufort Council were all invited to the maiden voyage. Chairwoman Clark said this sounded like a very good plan for this area. Ms. O'Bannon said invitations will be sent out and if anyone on Council plans to attend the maiden voyage to please contact her and let her know. Councilman Dr. Brantley asked how someone will know if they meet the income requirement to ride for free. Ms. O'Bannon said their office will review this for them and verify their total household income. A copy of the presentation will be attached to the minutes as Attachment "A".

B: Presentation by Dr. Rechel Anderson to provide an update of the Jasper County School District.

Dr. Rechel Anderson was present to make this presentation of the update of the Jasper County School District. She discussed the current enrollment of the students in the Jasper County School District system. She also discussed the Transportation System and noted how the Bus Planner allows the school system and parents to track the students in real time on the buses. She said this was a good safety

feature and that they would be sharing this on March 22nd with the parents. She discussed capital projects and noted that there were many capital projects underway. She noted a few of the current projects such as the stormwater drainage project at Hardeeville and Ridgeland; electronic marquees at Hardeeville, Ridgeland and the JCAP campuses; and the JCAP field upgrades, paving and fencing.

Dr. Anderson provided a Technology Update and noted that all students in Jasper County have access to a mobile device and provided the grades and type of device that they were given. She noted that 1250 mobile hotspots have been issued with unlimited data and that all students who have requested a hotspot had received one. She mentioned that they charge a \$35 technology fee and they provide a protective case for all devices. She said the \$35 technology usage fee was used to defray the cost associated with device repairs and replacements. Councilman Dr. Brantley asked what happened to students who lose or damage their device and cannot afford to replace them. Dr. Anderson noted that they have alumni donations and such that are set aside with revenue to replace these. She provided Instructional Updates for Council and noted that summer school will be offered for all grade levels this summer. She said this would be an in person summer school and will run from June 9th to July 1st for grades pre K through 11th grade and meals and transportation will be provided. She said all programs will be held at the Ridgeland campus. Dr. Anderson also covered information such as the new initiatives for the district, the Newcomer Academy Immersion Program, the Virtual Scholars Academy, Dual Enrollment and gave a Program Process overview. A copy of this presentation will be attached to the minutes as Attachment "B".

Open Floor to the Public per Ordinance 08-17 any citizen of the County may sign to speak before the Council on matters pertaining to County Services and Operations. Presentations will be limited to three (3) minutes and total public input will be limited to 30 minutes.

Resolutions:

A: Kimberly Burgess – Resolution No. 2021-06 authorising the temporary borrowing of not to exceed \$1,177,380 in anticipation of the issuance of fire protection service general obligation bonds of Jasper County, South Carolina for the Marsh Cove Fire Station.

Ms. Burgess discussed this resolution and explained that it allowed for the authorization of the temporary borrowing as requested in anticipation of the issuance of the fire protection service general obligation bonds for the Marsh Cove Fire Station. Ms. Burgess noted that this resolution was to refund the current bond in anticipation note that the County has in order to help construct the Marsh Cove Fire Station. The 12 months for the current bond anticipation note ends on 04/23/2021 and needs to be reissued. She noted that we need to reauthorize issuance of a bond anticipation note in the same amount and the terms should be the same. She said staff was seeking approval to move forward with this request.

Motion to approve: Councilman Kemp

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

Councilman Dr. Brantley was not on the screen to vote.

The motion passed.

B: Andrew Fulghum - Resolution No. 2021-07 to approve and adopt an Intergovernmental Agreement between Jasper County and the City of Hardeeville (East Argent Improvement District)

Mr. Fulghum noted that this resolution approves the IGA to approve the MID. He stated that this would help the city to finance the infrastructure. He noted that staff was asking that Council adopt this resolution to approve the IGA. He reviewed the aspects of the resolution for council. He noted that council had talked about this in Executive Session. The City of Hardeeville created a (Municipal Improvement District) MID for the East Argent Tract which is another layer of taxation as a tool the city can use for the financing of infrastructure and future development. They established a MID and the County's role is to take their assessment and work on collections. Mr. Tedder has put this together in several Articles within the document. He reviewed the different Articles for Council. He noted that staff asks that Council adopt the resolution which would adopt the Intergovernmental Agreement.

Motion to approve: Councilman Dr. Brantley

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

C: Kimberly Burgess – Resolution No. 2021-08 authorizing the County Administrator and the County Finance Director to assist the Jasper County Sheriff with the application/procurement/acquisition of a credit card account for use by the Sheriff, and related matters.

Ms. Burgess explained this request for Council noting that the Sheriff's Dept. had asked for help to obtain credit cards to ensure transparency. Councilman Dr. Brantley asked if anyone would be monitoring the expenses and Ms. Burgess noted that as the administrator of the account that she would be monitoring the expenditures of the account. Councilman Kemp asked if there was a limit on the credit cards. She noted that there were 6 cards with the sheriff's card having the highest limit of \$5,000 and the remaining 5 cards having a limit of \$1,000 to \$2,000 each. Ms. Burgess also covered the procurement policy and discussed how it works and answered questions relating to the policy. Chairwoman Clark said that Sheriff Hipp had been very thorough and transparent in all things as he works with Council. She noted that he comes to discuss issues with them, and if there are things he needs, he asks about them and discusses the requests. She said Sheriff Hipp is very thorough with how he handles his business.

Motion to approve: Councilman Dr. Brantley

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Ordinances:

- A. **Lisa Wagner – Public hearing and 2nd reading of Ordinance No. 2021-09 to amend the Official Zoning Map of Jasper County so as to transfer two properties bearing Jasper County Tax Map Numbers 063-32-05-028 and 063-32-04-031 from the Residential Zone to the General Commercial Zone on the Jasper County Official Zoning Map.**

Ms. Wagner noted that the subject properties consist of 4.60 acres and 4.10 acres located at 1280 Grahamville Road and 8747 Grahamville Road. The Applicant has requested a Zoning Map Amendment to have both properties designated as General Commercial (GC). The property is currently zoned Residential. A commercial structure is located on 1280 Grahamville Road and a manufactured home and two stick-built houses are located on 8747 Grahamville Road. She noted that according to the 2018 Jasper County Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Map identifies this area as "Urban Transition," which are pockets of unincorporated Jasper County that are partially or entirely surrounded by the municipality. For these areas that experience new development or redevelopment, consideration should be given to working with the adjacent municipality for annexation. The adjacent parcels are zoned Residential and is adjacent to the Town of Ridgeland. Adjacent land uses are residential, and vacant property with commercial nearby in the Town of Ridgeland.

Ms. Wagner noted that the subject property is accessed by Grahamville Road, which is a two-lane state maintained highway, classified as a collector road. She noted that the Planning Commission recommends approval of the request to have the property designated as General Commercial.

The public hearing was opened. Ms. Wagner read the public hearing comments and letters for the record. Public hearing comments were received from:

Mary Bright, Ernest Bright, Wilma Bright, Darnell Benton and family, Shirley Gardner, Linda Bright Edwards, Austin and Deborah Bright, Janice Bright, Cornell Wilson Jr., Willa E. Young of Young Funeral Home. After the comments were read the public hearing was closed.

Motion to approve: Councilman Dr. Brantley

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

New Business:

- A. [Kimberly Burgess](#) – Request to transfer the funds from the Athletic Programs budget line item # 4730 to purchase grounds maintenance equipment for the ballfields at amount not to exceed \$15,300.00.**

Ms. Burgess noted that as a result of closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the athletic programs that were scheduled and for which the County budgeted \$45,000 in the ATHLETIC PROGRAMS line item 010-078-4730 were cancelled. These cancellations have resulted in unused funds of approximately \$37,500 remaining in the budget line item. She noted that Johnny Davis, the Parks and Recreation Director would like to purchase a bunker and field rake for an amount not to exceed \$16,000 to maintain all the County ball fields. However, the EQUIPMENT line item, 010-078-2730, which is where this purchase should be recorded is at 89% of the budgeted amount largely due to the necessity to replace a mower early in the fiscal year. Ms. Burgess stated that staff is requesting that County Council approve a budget transfer of \$15,300 from line item 010-078-4730 ATHLETIC PROGRAMS to line item 010-078-2430 EQUIPMENT and to approve the purchase of the bunker and field rake.

Motion to approve the request not to exceed \$16,000: Councilman Dr. Brantley

Second: Councilman Adkins

Discussion:

Councilman Kemp questioned what equipment they were using now to do this to the field and he wanted to know if this machine was for one field or for all fields. He also questioned if this was something that was really needed. Ms. Burgess noted that this was a particular machine for ball fields and could be used for golf course greens and would be used for all of our ball fields. She also mentioned that according to Mr. Davis that they usually use a big tractor from public works currently to do this work at this time. Councilman Dr. Brantley noted that questions should come before a motion is carried. Councilman Kemp said that this was the time for questions since it had not been voted on.

Vote: Councilman Dr. Brantley – Yes

Councilman Adkins – Yes

Chairwoman Clark – Yes

Councilman Kemp – No

The motion passed.

Old Business:

A. Danny Lucas - Shortening the name on the Airport entry road.

Mr. Danny Lucas was present to address this request. Mr. Lucas noted that they had submitted the road name several months ago and that a name had been approved. He said however, at this time for 911 compliance the name of the road needed to be shortened. He said they were asking for the road to be named Barbara B. Clark Dr. Councilman Kemp stated that he would like to put Hon. Barbara B Clark Dr. on the sign for the road name so that everyone would know in the future that she was a Councilmember. Mr. Lucas said that should work fine on the sign.

Motion to approve: Councilman Kemp

Second: Chairwoman Clark

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Council Members Comments:

Councilman Kemp:

Councilman Kemp noted that he had been at Levy on Saturday and they had done a litter pickup in the area. He noted they had about 20 people there and around 20 bags were picked up. He stated that he thought council should have a workshop on litter control so they could get this matter resolved. He also noted that the Planning Commission needed to have some people reappointed and that this needed to be put on the agenda and that Councilman Sauls had a death in the family and he wanted everyone to keep them in prayer.

Councilman Adkins:

Councilman Adkins noted that he just wanted to thank God for everything. He mentioned that he had went Saturday to Renty Kitty's mother's funeral and that he desired everyone's prayer and would be praying for their family.

Councilman Dr. Brantley:

Councilman Dr. Brantley encouraged everyone to get the COVID vaccine and hoped that God blessed them.

Administrator's Report:

Administrator Fulghum noted that his report was in their packet for their review. He said he had also gotten a letter from Lyn Boyles regarding litter pickup. She noted that they had picked up 6200 pounds of litter, containing 310 bags and 9 tires. He also noted that they had been putting together information for the retreat and was looking at the next steps regarding COVID and openings of locations based upon what the upcoming information from the Governor and what those requirements may be. Mr. Fulghum noted that if they had any questions, he was here to answer them. He then noted he would be turning it over to Chief Wells for the COVID update report.

Chief Wells presented the COVID statistics report and reviewed the positivity rate of the State of South Carolina and of Jasper County. He said we were seeing a downward trend, and he urged the citizens to protect themselves. He also noted that information regarding testing and vaccination sites and locations and noted those. This report is attached as Attachment "C".

Possible Return to Executive Session to Continue Discussion on Matters Regarding Agenda Item II:

There was no need to return to executive session for this meeting.

Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn: Councilman Dr. Brantley

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully submitted:



Wanda H. Simmons
Clerk to Council

Approved:



Barbara B. Clark
Chairwoman