

**MINUTES
ORANGEBURG COUNTY COUNCIL
DECEMBER 15, 2014
5:30 P.M.**

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, the news media was notified and notice was posted on the bulletin board 24 hours prior to the meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

**Johnnie Wright, Sr.
Harry Wimberly
Heyward H. Livingston
Clyde Livingston
Willie B. Owens
Johnny Ravenell
Janie Cooper-Smith**

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

**Harold Young, County Administrator
Angel Howell, Interim Clerk to Council
D'Anne Haydel, County Attorney**

CALL TO ORDER

Johnnie Wright, Sr., Chairman

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Johnny Ravenell – Prayer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 17, 2014 & December 1, 2014

Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Councilwoman Cooper-Smith made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilman Owens. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: AGENDA ITEMS NONE

PUBLIC COMMENTS: OTHER MATTERS NONE

1. PRESENTATION BY THE COMMUNITY OF CHARACTER PACK

Chairman Wright yielded the floor to Mrs. Lovell Brothers. Mrs. Brothers greeted everyone in attendance to the meeting and recognized Chairman Wright for attending their first Character Day in Orangeburg County. She thanked Mr. Young for his donation and volunteer services that contributed to the success of the event. Mrs. Brothers acknowledged Mrs. Earline Robison, Aurora Smalls, Susan Kirby, Jannella Shuler and Mrs. Charlene

Brown for their help in packaging 170 fruit baskets for senior citizens at the Orangeburg Council on Aging. She then presented the Council with a fruit basket. Chairman Wright thanked Mrs. Brothers for the fruit baskets and her services. Mrs. Brothers began to recognize four recipients for the Community of Character Pack. The first recipient was Officer Clifford Goodwin for the month of August who exhibited the trait respect. The second recipient was Janesia Rickenbacker. The third recipient was Mrs. Birdie Taylor for the month of November and the trait she displayed was gratitude. The fourth and last recipient was Mrs. Ruby Sanders for the month of December for exhibiting the trait of generosity.

Chairman Wright thanked Mrs. Brothers for the recognition and congratulated the honorees.

2. ORANGEBURG COUNTY DETENTION CENTER EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Chairman Wright yielded the floor to County Administrator Harold Young who stated that this is a coalition of changes made at the Detention Center. Mr. Young recognized Sharicka Taylor for being a distinguished graduate of the SC Criminal Justice Academy and winning the Bert Friday Award. Ms. Taylor scored the highest in the history of the award.

3. UPDATE ON REASSESSMENT PROCESS

Chairman Wright yielded the floor to the staff who could better relay the information. Mr. Young introduced Mr. Jim McLean, the tax assessor, who will give an update and an overview on the reassessment process. Mr. Young stated that notices were sent out a few weeks ago. Mr. McLean stated that this year marked the County's 5 year reassessment, making note of the state law which requires the County to reevaluate all of the property in the County every five (5) years. Notices were mailed out in September and 95% of those notices appeal period ends on December 29, 2014. Mr. McLean stated that this year was the second time the County has had to apply the Act 388, which is the capping law passed limiting the amount of increase of taxable value. In doing so, the effect was not what was expected. There are a number of properties that the market value has decreased, yet the taxable value still increased because of past values. Councilman Livingston asked how long it would take to work through the 1,450 appeals. Mr. McLean replied all of the appeals should be taken care of around March. Councilwoman Cooper-Smith asked about the protocol for someone appealing, but would in the end owe money. Mr. McLean answered that this rarely happens but citizens would have to pay the difference. Councilman Heyward Livingston asked what the difference is in taxable revenue this year compared to last year and Mr. McLean stated that he would have to consult with the auditor in order to answer that question. Mr. Young advised Mr. McLean to share what information is needed to file an appeal. Mr. McLean stated that a tax map number should be included along with reasons for the disagreement, an estimate of value and a signature. Councilman Heyward Livingston asked if the value of property is based on sales of surrounding property. Mr. McLean answered yes. Councilman Heyward Livingston asked if that goes for the County

as a whole or if it is divided into cities and towns. Mr. McLean stated that they have divided the County into several neighborhoods. Councilman Ravenell asked what the time frame is for a refund and Mr. McLean answered it is a two week window, in which an application is sent and a refund issued in a few weeks. Chairman Wright asked about a residential exemption. Mr. McLean stated those exempt will get the exemption and that two years is the maximum refund period. Councilman Ravenell asked what determines a primary home or secondary home if a couple is separated. Mr. McLean stated that the separation must be legal. Under the law, there is one per married couple, but if there is a legal separation, the two parties can get their own. A copy of a stamped agreement would have to be turned into the tax assessor's office. Administrator Young informed citizens that there is more information on the County's website. Deputy Administrator Marion Lloyd stated that the standard rate is 6% and taxpayers must apply for the discounts. If there is an ownership deed, or an owner is deceased or has homestead, property owners must reapply because ownership has changed.

Chairman Wright thanked everyone for clarifying concerns of citizens. Councilwoman Cooper-Smith explained the homestead exemption stating that if a taxpayer turns 65 by December 31, you can apply and receive a \$50,000 deduction that next year. She gave an example stating that if a home is worth \$60,000, the deduction can be applied and taxes will be paid on only \$10,000.

4. **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING (1) THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AND INCENTIVE AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN ORANGEBURG COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA (THE "COUNTY") AND A COMPANY IDENTIFIED FOR THE TIME BEING AS PROJECT SAMBA, ACTING FOR ITSELF, ONE OR MORE AFFILIATES OR OTHER PROJECT SPONSORS (THE "COMPANY"), PURSUANT TO WHICH THE COUNTY SHALL COVENANT TO ACCEPT CERTAIN NEGOTIATED FEES IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES WITH RESPECT TO THE ESTABLISHMENT AND/OR EXPANSION OF CERTAIN FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY (COLLECTIVELY, THE "PROJECT"); AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO.**

Chairman Wright asked the County Administrator to give a brief summary. Mr. Young stated this is a typical fee in lieu agreement before yielding the floor to the attorney for economic development. The attorney stated that this resolution promises a minimum investment of \$7.7 million in revenue and will create a minimum of 14 new jobs. The company is requesting that the location is a multi-county industrial park.

Councilman Ravenell moved to accept the resolution as stated, seconded by Councilman Owens. Motion carried. Vote: 7-0-0

5. **ORDINANCE – SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING**

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING (1) EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AND INCENTIVE AGREEMENT BY AND AMONG ORANGEBURG COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA (THE "COUNTY") AND COX INDUSTRIES, INC., A COMPANY PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED AS PROJECT

GREEN, ACTING FOR ITSELF, ONE OR MORE AFFILIATES OR OTHER PROJECT SPONSERS (THE "COMPANY"), WHEREBY THE COUNTY SHALL COVENANT TO ACCEPT CERTAIN NEGOTIATED FEES IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXES WITH RESPECT TO THE ESTABLISHMENT AND/OR EXPANSION OF CERTAIN FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY (COLLECTIVELY, THE "PROJECT"); (2) THE BENEFITS OF A MULTI-COUNTY INDUSTRIAL OR BUSINESS PARK TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE COMPANY; (3) CERTAIN SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDITS IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROJECT; AND (4) OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO.

Chairman Wright asked that the attorney give a brief summary. The attorney stated that this is a promise to create 36 jobs, and that the term will be for 30 years and there is a credit core 5 year term. They desire to split the expansion in a multi county industrial park with Dorchester County, which is item number 5.

No comments were made during the Public Hearing.

Councilwoman Cooper-Smith moved to approve the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Heyward Livingston. Motion carried. Vote 7-0-0

6. ORDINANCE-SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE EXISTING AMENDED AND RESTATED AGREEMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF JOINT COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARK BY AND BETWEEN ORANGEBURG COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AND DORCHESTER COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA TO ENLARGE THE BOUNDARIES OF THE INDUSTRIAL PARK TO INCLUDE CERTAIN PROPERTY LOCATED IN ORANGEBURG COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA NOW OR TO BE HEREAFTER OWNED AND/OR OPERATED BY COX INDUSTRIES, INC., A COMPANY PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED AS PROJECT GREEN, OR ONE OR MORE COMPANIES RELATED THERETO; AND AUTHORIZING OTHER RELATED MATTERS

Chairman Wright stated that the attorney gave a summary during the last agenda item.

No comments were made during the Public Hearing.

Councilman Heyward Livingston moved to approve the ordinance, seconded by Councilman Owens. Motion carried. Vote 7-0-0

7. TAX AND TOURISM RECOMMENDATION

Chairman Wright yielded the floor to the County Administrator. Mr. Young stated that on November 26, 2014 the Orangeburg County Tax and Tourism Advisory Committee met

and received recommendations for approval for funding and are seeking final approval from County Council. There were four (4) requests made. The first was from Santee Cooper-Country in the amount of \$20,000.00 to help with the promotion of the fish tournament and other activities in the Santee area. The second request was from the Orangeburg Xpress Basketball Organization, an affiliate of AAU, in the amount of \$24,127.00 to help bid on a regional tournament sight. Mr. Young stated that the site was acquired last year and proved successful in bringing people to Orangeburg. The third request was from the Tri-County Regional Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$20,000.00 to help with advertising the tri-county regional area in which Orangeburg County is a part of. The last request was for \$8,000.00 from the Regional Educational and Economic Community Development Corporation, Inc. to create brochures that will be disseminated throughout South Carolina helping promote Orangeburg County historical sites. The amount of recommended funding from the committee was \$72,127.00 and the amount available for funding is \$139,785.29, leaving a balance of \$67,658.29. Councilman Owens wanted to know if the Tri-County Chamber obtains funding from the other two counties and Mr. Young answered yes. Councilman Wimberly wanted more information about the Orangeburg Xpress request. Mr. Young stated that the team is a member of the AAU basketball association, which allows several teams to play basketball throughout the county and throughout the year. Teams have the ability to become a regional site and to do so, a bid must be placed, along with a financial fee, and teams throughout the Southeast attend and participate to be able to compete in the national tournament. Councilman Wimberly asked if the money is refunded if the bid is lost and Mr. Young answered yes, making note that Orangeburg has won the bid in past years. He also pointed out other areas have difficulty coming up with the bid fee and the County has access to multiple gyms. When teams participate in the three (3) day tournament, they spend money on hotels and restaurants. Councilwoman Cooper-Smith asked how many years this tournament has taken place in Orangeburg and Mr. Young answered three (3) years.

Councilman Wimberly moved to accept the recommendation by the Tax and Tourism Advisory Committee as stated, seconded by Councilwoman Cooper-Smith. Motion carried. Vote 7-0-0

8. APPOINTMENTS

1. SANTEE FIRE COMMISSION: DISTRICT 2

Councilman Ravenell moved to appoint Mr. John (Joseph) T. Goodwin to the Santee Fire Commission, seconded by Councilman Owens. Motion carried. Vote: 7-0-0

2. ORANGEBURG COUNTY FIRE SERVICES: DISTRICT 2

Councilman Ravenell moved to reappoint David Funchess to District 2, seconded by Councilman Clyde Livingston. Motion carried. Vote: 7-0-0

3. ORANGEBURG COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS: DISTRICT 7

Councilman Owens moved to appoint Anthony Jarvis to the Orangeburg County Zoning Board of Appeals for District 7, seconded by Councilman Ravenell. Motion carried.

Vote: 7-0-0

9. APPROVAL OF CALENDAR YEAR 2015 COUNTY COUNCIL MEETINGS

County Administrator Young stated that several dates are taken into account.

Councilman Owens moved to approve the calendar, seconded by Councilman Wimberly. Motion carried. Vote: 7-0-0

10. APPROVAL OF CALENDAR YEAR 2015 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Councilwoman Cooper-Smith moved to approve the holiday schedule as written, seconded by Councilman Heyward Livingston. Motion carried. Vote: 7-0-0

11. VOTE FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilwoman Cooper-Smith moved to go into Executive Session, seconded by Councilman Ravenell to enter executive for economic development.

Motion carried.

Vote: 7-0-0

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

13. VOTE FOR ADJOURNMENT

Pre-vote comment was made by Councilman Ravenell as he stated that citizens should be mindful of passing property to loved ones to avoid conflicts. Councilman Wimberly asked that if a transaction occurs between family members, the property can continue to be exempt. Mr. Young answered yes. Chairman Wright stated that he will make sure that information is relayed at the next County Council meeting. Councilman Clyde Livingston requested that the tax assessor give a presentation of the tax information at the next regular meeting.

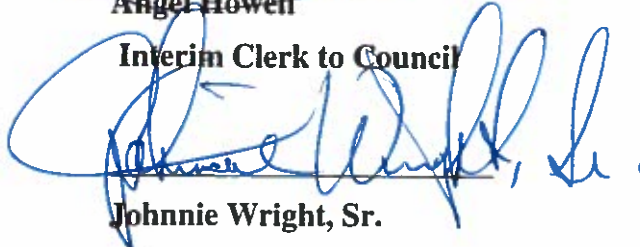
14. ADJOURNMENT

**Councilman Heyward Livingston moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Owens.
Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.**



Angel Howell

Interim Clerk to Council



Johnnie Wright, Sr.

Chairman, County Council

