

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
SALUDA COUNTY COUNCIL
MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, SALUDA COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
400 WEST HIGHLAND STREET, SALUDA, SOUTH CAROLINA

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jim Moore called the regular meeting of Saluda County Council to order at 6:00 P.M.

Present were: Chairman Jim Moore
Vice-Chairman Jack Atkinson
Councilman Carey Bedenbaugh
Councilman J. Frank Daniel, Sr.

Also present were: County Administrator, Sandra G. Padgett
Regina H. Turner, Clerk to Council
Attorney, Virginia Bozeman

Absent: Councilman Justin Anderson

B. INVOCATION Vice Chairman Atkinson delivered the invocation.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Chairman Moore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. PUBLIC INFORMATION

It is noted by the Clerk herein, that in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the regular meeting was given to the local news media and properly posted, to include the county website.

The following notice was placed at the beginning of the agenda:

Please note meetings are open to the public. Access to the live video is available by going to the County's Facebook page (Saluda County, SC Government).

E. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh seconded by Councilman Daniel the agenda was unanimously approved.

F. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of Vice Chairman Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Bedenbaugh the minutes for March 11th and 19th, 2024 were unanimously approved as submitted.

G. REPORTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilman Bedenbaugh reported that he attended an Easter Nursing Center program and encouraged others to be involved.

Vice-Chairman Atkinson notified everyone of a Meet and Greet at the Saluda Museum and Theater for the upcoming candidates to speak.

Councilman Daniel commented on the attendance of the meeting and thanked those who came out.

Chairman Moore mentioned that the comments on social media are not always accurate and for citizens to come to the meetings, come into county offices, ask our Public Information Officer or check the County's website. Chairman Moore also encouraged everyone to come out to the Saluda County Farmers Festival at the Tractor Pull and Recreation Sites and also to attend the Free Benefit Concert to raise funds to help send Saluda County families with special needs children to camp which was sponsored by EMS. Chairman Moore let the other Councilmen know there would be a Special Called Meeting on April 15th and May 6th.

H. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Chairman Moore recognized Timothy Osterfield to speak regarding threats and criminal activity in his neighborhood without law enforcement oversight. He also spoke regarding lack of animal control in the area.

Chairman Moore recognized Paul Gilbert from Lake Murray Estates Neighborhood Watch. Mr. Gilbert gave Council a letter showing his research on the surrounding areas Law Enforcement Pay and statistical data to explain his concern in securing qualified deputies.

I. PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing on Ordinance No. 02-24, "AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 302 WEST HIGHLAND STREET, SALUDA, SOUTH CAROLINA TO COMPORIUM INC.".

No one signed up to speak.

J. OLD BUSINESS

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh seconded by Vice Chairman Atkinson, Third Reading was unanimously approved on Ordinance No. 02-24, "AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 302 WEST HIGHLAND STREET, SALUDA, SOUTH CAROLINA TO COMPORIUM INC.".

K. NEW BUSINESS

On motion of Councilman Daniel, seconded by Chairman Moore, First Reading was approved with Chairman Moore, Vice-Chairman Atkinson and Councilman Daniel voting for and Councilman Bedenbaugh voting against on Ordinance No. 03-24, "AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A UNIFORM SERVICE CHARGE FOR MOTORIZED VEHICLE USERS OF THE COUNTY ROADS OF SALUDA COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA.". Chairman Moore explained that he contacted the Roads and Bridges Department to get input on how to help get the County's roads in better condition. The county would need to retain an Engineering Firm to conduct studies on our road system to best

address the need of signs (speed and other), flood zone improvements, bridge replacements. The county needs to increase the use of Calcium Chloride for dust and road surface hardening. The department also would need to update its work management system and have a contractor address slate rock areas. To get these improvements the county would need additional funds. He stated that this fee would apply to all vehicle owners and not just property owners.

Councilman Bedenbaugh said he did agree with some of this but was not in favor of it due to other things going on such as the school and other county improvements.

Chairman Moore stated that he was a conservative but he also sees the need for increased services and that can not be done without increased revenue. The fee works out to .38 cents per week. He stressed that we need businesses coming into the county to help relieve the tax burden from the citizens but businesses need the infrastructure.

Vice-Chairman Atkinson informed everyone of some items that were in the SCAC Friday report and how things have changed since he moved here 25 years ago. He has always been against raising taxes. He said he now knows that the county does need the increase in what the state allows because we have put ourselves in the hole by not increasing taxes when needed and we will never get that back.

Councilman Daniel stated that he voted for a fee a few years ago and not we have to start all over again. He said that Lexington is looking at \$40 but we are asking for \$20 and better services come at a price. Councilman Daniel said that we can't compete with our surrounding counties with industry and the county citizens have to do what we can. He acknowledged he had five vehicles in his yard and that would be a \$100 cost for him. He said to maintain the county roads we are going to have to make this change.

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Vice-Chairman Atkinson, First Reading was unanimously approved on Ordinance No. 04-24, "AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2024, FOR EDUCATIONAL AND SCHOOL PURPOSES IN SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE OF SALUDA COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA: TO PROVIDE FOR LEVY OF TAXES AND THE TAXABLE PROPERTY IN SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE: TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF SAID TAXES AND OTHER REVENUES COMING INTO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT DURING THE FISCAL YEAR. Chairman Moore stated that Saluda County Council shall determine and establish a tax of sufficient millage to support \$6,200,000.00 from Ad Valorem Taxes as county funding for the appropriations and levies made herein, and shall advise the Auditor who shall fix said millage as advised by the Council. The total budget at first reading for the school is \$27,399,127.00.

On motion of Councilman Daniel, seconded by Vice-Chairman Atkinson, First Reading was unanimously approved on Ordinance No. 05-24, AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF SALUDA COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2024; TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES ON ALL TAXABLE PROPERTY IN SALUDA COUNTY FOR ALL COUNTY PURPOSES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2024; TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF TAX REVENUES AND OTHER COUNTY FUNDS; TO PROVIDE FOR OTHER COUNTY PURPOSES; TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2024; AND TO PROVIDE FOR CERTAIN FISCAL AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING TO COUNTY GOVERNMENT." Chairman Moore stated that the amount for First Reading for the county operating budget is \$16,978,746.00. The difference in proposed expenditures and revenues is \$197,705.00.

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Councilman Daniel the Resolution for Fair Housing Month was unanimously approved.

On motion of Councilman Daniel, seconded by Vice-Chairman Atkinson it was unanimously approved to award the bid to build the Detention Center and EMS Building to Edon General Contractors and have Moseley Architects and Council Staff negotiate final details. The additional cost over what has been appropriated will be paid from Capital Projects Fund Balance. Chairman Moore recognized Jason Hopkins of Moseley Architects and he stated that they were very excited to see the project move forward.

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Vice-Chairman Atkinson it was unanimously approved to accept the Bond Compliance Policies and Procedures as presented. Chairman Moore stated that the purpose of these policies and procedures is to ensure compliance with the legal requirements applicable to Tax-Advantage Bonds.

On Motion of Vice-Chairman Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Daniel it was unanimously approved to award the RFP for the \$5,660,000 Bond Series (8%) to South State Bank at a rate of 3.95%. Chairman Moore stated that this 8% is 8% of our total property values.

On motion of Councilman Daniel, seconded by Vice-Chairman Atkinson it was unanimously approved to allow staff to issue a Request for Proposal for repairs at the Courthouse and American Legion Building. Chairman Moore recognized Heather Griffin, Purchasing Coordinator to explain the need for repairs. She stated that there were two issues with our two buildings as there is water leaking in from an unknown area between the brick and wall. The county needs a contractor to find and fix these problems.

On motion of Vice-Chairman Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Bedenbaugh it was unanimously approved to authorize the County Administrator to transfer funds from Contingency to balance accounts as needed. Chairman Moore explained that these funds are allocated in the 23-24 budget for this purpose.

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Vice-Chairman Atkinson it was unanimously approved to appoint Stephanie Bonner to the Airport Commission as an alternate.

On motion of Councilman Daniel, seconded by Chairman Moore it was unanimously approved to appoint Mayor Miliken Matthews to the GLEAMNS Board for the Low-Income Sector with his term expiring April 8, 2026.

L. EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Councilman Daniel council went into Executive Session pursuant to Section 30-4-70(a) (2) and (5) of the South Carolina Code of Laws 1976, as amended for the purpose of receiving legal advice on contracts and Palmetto Pointe and to return at the call of the Chair.

Chairman Moore called the meeting back in open session

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Vice-Chairman Atkinson the agenda was amended to give First Reading on Ordinance No. 06-24 “AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 304 WEST HIGHLAND STREET, SALUDA, SOUTH CAROLINA”

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Vice-Chairman Atkinson First Reading was unanimously approved on Ordinance No. 06-24 “AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 304 WEST HIGHLAND STREET, SALUDA, SOUTH CAROLINA”

M. ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Councilman Bedenbaugh, it was unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 P.M.

James L. Moore, Saluda County Council
Chairman

Regina H. Turner
Clerk to Council
Date Approved: May 13, 2024