

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
SALUDA COUNTY COUNCIL
MONDAY, MAY 8, 2017 AT 6:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF SALUDA COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
400 WEST HIGHLAND STREET, SALUDA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29138

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Donald E. Hancock called the regular meeting of Saluda County Council to order at 6:00 P.M.

Present were: Chm. Donald E. Hancock
Coun. Jones P. Butler
Coun. J. Frank Daniel, Sr.
Coun. D. J. Miller
Coun. Gwendolyn C. Shealy

Also present were: County Director, Sandra G. Padget
Clerk to Council, Karen T. Whittle
County Attorney, Christian G. Spradley

B. INVOCATION

Coun. Daniel delivered the invocation.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chm. Hancock led the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of Coun. Butler, seconded by Coun. Shealy, the minutes for March 21, 22, 23, 27, April 4, 10, 12, 13, 18, 20, 25, and 26, 2017 were unanimously approved as submitted.

E. PUBLIC INFORMATION

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

F. REPORTS OF COUNTY OFFICIALS

No reports from County Council.

G. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Chm. Hancock opened the Public Hearing on Ordinance No. 03-17, "AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 06-14 TO REDUCE LEASE RATES OF T-HANGARS OWNED BY SALUDA COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, LOCATED AT THE SALUDA COUNTY AIRPORT." Chm. Hancock stated the following T-Hangar lease rates were recommended by the Airport Commission: T-Hangars 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 lease rate would decrease from \$175.00 to \$100.00; T-Hangar 5 lease rate would decrease from \$200.00 to \$125.00; and T-Hangar 8 lease rate would decrease from \$187.00 to \$105.00 or \$110.00 with rental of storage room.

Mr. J. W. Atkinson spoke and expressed he had no problem with the lease rate amounts, but expressed concern of aircraft being assessed at ten percent in Saluda County. (NOTE: The County Auditor had clarification printed in the May 18, 2017 edition of the Saluda Standard Sentinel that the tax ratio on all airplanes in Saluda County is four percent.)

No one else spoke and the public hearing was closed.

H. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

Chm. Hancock recognized Rev. Annette Mathis to speak concerning Brooks Roston Park.

Rev. Annette Mathis, on behalf of the Concerned Citizens of Saluda, asked the following questions of County Council on Brooks and Roston Ball Park (copies of questions were submitted to Council):

1. Did the County Council consult with the community concerning the Brooks and Roston Park?
2. Who does the County Council believe owns the Brooks and Roston Park?
3. Instead of a lease agreement, why did the County Council insist on a quit claim deed to give the Brooks and Roston Park to the County?
4. Is the County Council responsible for cutting the timber of the Brooks and Roston Park property, and if so, who authorized it?
5. What future plans does the County Council have for the Brooks and Roston Park?
6. Why did the County close the Brooks and Roston Park, tear down the concession stand and restrooms, remove some of the playground equipment, shut off the water and electricity, and reopen it to the public?
7. When will the new concession stand, restrooms, water and electricity be back up and running for the community?
8. The concerned citizens developed the Brooks and Roston Park and some things are sentimental value and needs to stay as is in the community. We have no desire to move the adult softball field and that is the reason it was developed to play softball.
9. Is the County funding the Ward Park and do they own that Park?

Rev. Mathis said they were requesting a response in writing in a timely manner and thanked County Council in advance for their cooperation.

Chm. Hancock thanked Rev. Mathis and said Council would respond with answers to the questions in a timely manner.

Chm. Hancock stated the following comments for the record. "Three things must happen before Council can proceed with any action related to the park. In the history of the park, several agencies outside of Saluda County, to include S.C. Parks Recreation and Tourism, and the Department of Interior have put funding into the park. As such, these agencies have input in any future improvements of the park. One stipulation as many of you already know is that the park must remain a recreational facility. Council has been in contact with Parks Recreation and Tourism and Council is expecting a legal document that we hope will clarify status of the park. S.C. Parks Recreation and Tourism is waiting on information from the National Parks Service in Atlanta to help with this clarification. The park was closed and buildings were removed on recommendation from the County's insurance agency that underwrites the County's liability policy. The Council needs to be able to deal with one organization and one spokesperson who has the authority to speak on behalf of the community and park. In research on the park and looking at several documentations and speaking with several members of the Riverside community, several organizations have popped up to include, the Saluda County Progressive Recreation Association, the Saluda Recreation District, The Saluda Recreation Commission, and the Concerned Citizens. The Council must be able to communicate with one single organization. Some of these organizations I think are no longer viable, such as Saluda County Progressive Recreation Association and maybe one or two others. Because of the legal nature and to help expedite discussion, it would be helpful and is almost essential for park representatives to have legal representation. It would be beneficial for the County Attorney to have a legal counterpart to address any legal issues related to the park. In summary, three things are necessary before Council can move forward: 1) the documentation I addressed earlier from S.C. Parks Recreation and Tourism; 2) identification of a specific organization and spokesperson; and 3) legal representation. I mentioned earlier that the documentation from S.C. Parks Recreation and Tourism is expected and hoped for in the next two weeks, though no specific date has been offered from Parks Recreation and Tourism."

In response to Chm. Hancock's statement concerning one community spokesperson, Coun. Miller suggested a representative from the Saluda Recreation District since it was established by state law and the legislature. Coun. Miller said those members were appointed by the Governor.

County Council Members, the County Attorney and other citizens of the audience spoke after Chm. Hancock's statement. (A copy of the tape is on file in the Clerk to Council's office).

I. OLD BUSINESS

1. On motion of Coun. Shealy, seconded by Coun. Butler, and unanimously approved, Third Reading was given on Ordinance No 03-17, "AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 06-14 TO REDUCE LEASE RATES OF T-HANGARS OWNED BY SALUDA COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, LOCATED AT THE SALUDA COUNTY AIRPORT."
2. On motion of Coun. Daniel, seconded by Coun. Miller, and unanimously approved, Second Reading was given on Ordinance No. 04-17, "AN ORDINANCE TO ENABLE THE CORONER'S OFFICE OF SALUDA COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA TO CHARGE A FEE FOR A CREMATION PERMIT." During discussion Chm. Hancock stated a fee set in the annual county operating budget shall be paid to the Coroner for the issuance of a permit for cremation, such fee to be paid by the person requesting the permit. Funds received from the permit shall be returned to the general fund.
3. On motion of Coun. Butler, seconded by Coun. Shealy, and unanimously approved, Second Reading was given on Ordinance No. 05-17, "AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2017, 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: TO ESTABLISH A RESERVE ACCOUNT AND PROVIDE THAT ALL FUNDS IN EXCESS OF THE COUNTY APPROPRIATION WILL BE PAID INTO THE RESERVE ACCOUNT." During discussion Chm. Hancock stated Saluda County Council shall determine and establish a tax of sufficient millage to support \$6,622,234.00 minus revenues and credits reflected on the tax receipt from Fee-In-lieu, Property Tax Relief, Homestead Exemption, Tier 3 Property Tax Relief, and Motor Carrier, for a net amount of \$4,227,646.00 from Ad Valorem Taxes.

During discussion, Coun. Miller asked Ms. Kathy Culclasure to briefly explain the increase in the school budget.

Ms. Culclasure said the increase for the school budget was for mandatory teacher salary increases and the mandate of three additional teachers for new classes.

4. On motion of Coun. Daniel, seconded by Coun. Shealy, and unanimously approved, Second Reading was given on Ordinance No. 06-17, "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, 2017; 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, 2017; 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, 2017; AND TO PROVIDE FOR CERTAIN FISCAL AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING TO COUNTY GOVERNMENT.” During discussion Chm. Hancock stated the amount for Second Reading for the county operating budget was \$12,516,060.00 and debt service on bonds was \$161,903.63 for a total amount of \$12,677,963.63. The difference in proposed expenditures and revenues was \$1,530,263.00. Piedmont Technical College was requesting \$ 239,233.00 for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 appropriations. They are funded through millage and were not included in the above figures.

5. Chm. Hancock addressed consideration to award the Request for Proposal for Firefighter and EMS annual physicals. Chm. Hancock stated the Request for Proposals for the Firefighter and EMS employees’ annual physicals were reviewed and rated by a committee. Chm. Hancock said Firefighters and EMS personnel were required under national guidelines to have an annual health screening physical that was compliant with NFPA and OSHA standards. Due to response, services offered, and cost of \$270.00 per person, the committee recommended to award the Request for Proposal to SiteMed with the service renewable for three years.

On motion of Coun. Butler, seconded by Coun. Shealy, it was unanimously approved to award the Request for Proposal for Firefighter/EMS annual physicals to SiteMed at a cost of \$270.00 per person with the service renewable for three years.

J. NEW BUSINESS

1. Chm. Hancock read the following Release of Joint Statement:

In October 2015, former Saluda County Auditor Jane Guy, current Saluda County Auditor Memmus Forrest, and current Saluda County Treasurer Tina Shealy filed a lawsuit against Saluda County that challenged a provision of Saluda County’s ordinance governing salaries of elected officials as contrary to state law. In the interest of working together for the good of the County, the parties sought to resolve the dispute out of court. In April 2017, Saluda County, Jane Guy, Memmus Forrest and Tina Shealy entered into a written settlement agreement that resolves the dispute without any admission of unlawful action or intent by any party. The Saluda County Council believes that incomplete implementation in the past of a comprehensive pay scale system for county employees in part contributed to low salaries for the elected positions of County Treasurer and Auditor. While Ms. Guy, Mr. Forrest and Ms. Shealy lack personal knowledge of Council’s past intent, they do agree with the County that initiation of a new salary study for all county positions is in the best interest of the County.

2. On motion of Coun. Butler, seconded by Coun. Shealy, the settlement agreement by and between Jane B. Guy, Tina M. Shealy, Memmus Forrest and Saluda County was approved. (Voting in Favor: Chm. Hancock, Coun. Butler, Daniel, Shealy). (Opposed: Coun. Miller).
3. On motion of Coun. Miller, seconded by Coun. Butler, and unanimously approved, First Reading was given on Ordinance No. 07-17, "AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL ORDINANCE NO. 11-95, AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING MINIMUM BASE SALARIES OF CERTAIN ELECTED/APPOINTED SALUDA COUNTY OFFICIALS, AS CODIFIED IN THE CODE OF ORDINANCES SALUDA COUNTY SOUTH CAROLINA, CHAPTER 2 ADMINISTRATION, ARTICLE III OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES, SECTION 2-92 MINIMUM BASE SALARIES." Chm. Hancock read the entire ordinance prior to the motion.
4. On motion of Coun. Daniel, seconded by Coun. Shealy, and approved, First Reading was given on Ordinance No. 08-17, "AN ORDINANCE TO TRANSFER FUNDS FROM THE COUNTY RESERVE FUND BALANCE FOR AUDITOR AND TREASURER SETTLEMENT." (Voting in Favor: Chm. Hancock, Coun. Butler, Daniel, Shealy). (Opposed: Coun. Miller). Chm. Hancock read the entire ordinance prior to the motion.

Chm. Hancock announced there would be a called meeting Wednesday, May 10th at 5:30 P.M. for second reading on Ordinances No. 07-17 and 08-17.

5. Chm. Hancock stated next on the agenda was consideration to repeal the Longevity Pay Policy.

Chm. Hancock asked for a motion to repeal the longevity pay policy effective July 1, 2017, with the exception of the current pay grades, probation salary and Under 2 salary for each pay grade of the salary schedule, to be used as the county's salary schedule for new hires until the county adopts a new salary/compensation plan. Current probationary salary employees and future new hire probationary salary employees, will receive the Under 2 salary after completion of the six month probationary period. Other current employees, elected and appointed officials will keep current salaries. Until such new salary/compensation plan is adopted, the new pay for county employees transferring to a different position with a different pay grade, will be decided by County Council on a case by case basis. Coun. Shealy made the motion. Coun. Butler seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. During discussion Council members discussed the longevity pay policy and schedule, and the forthcoming wage and salary study.

6. On motion of Coun. Daniel, seconded by Coun. Shealy, and unanimously approved, First Reading was given on Ordinance No. 09-17, "AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM THE COUNTY RESERVED FUND BALANCE TO THE GENERAL OPERATING FUND FOR

THE COUNTY OF SALUDA FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017 TO BALANCE THE SALUDA COUNTY ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017.” Chm. Hancock read the entire ordinance prior to the motion. During discussion Chm. Hancock stated currently the amount was not to exceed \$100,000.00.

7. Chm. Hancock addressed consideration to install a reception/service window in the lobby at the Department of Social Services building. Chm. Hancock stated a memo had been received from the Saluda County DSS Director informing Council of a recent inspection by the State Office of Internal Audit Division. The audit found that the current window in the lobby was not a secure barrier. Chm. Hancock said three quotes were obtained for the installation of a secured glass window, speaker and trays with the lowest quote being from A & W Glass Services in the amount of \$6,100.00.

On motion of Coun. Shealy, seconded by Coun. Daniel, it was unanimously approved to award the installation of the reception/service window in the lobby of the Department of Social Services building to A & W Glass Services in the amount of \$6,100.00 to be paid from the Public Building Repair reserve account.

8. Chm. Hancock recognized Grants Coordinator Jill Warren to present consideration of a VOCA grant request for Victim Services through the S.C. Department of Public Safety.

Ms. Warren presented a grant request from the Victims Advocate for VOCA grant funds from the SC Department of Public Safety to purchase a sport utility vehicle (SUV) for transporting victims of crime to and from interviews, medical appointments and court, and for the Victims Advocate to attend mandated training and monthly meetings. Ms. Warren said some victim transports would include small children, therefore car/booster seats would be needed. Ms. Warren said the grant request was for: one vehicle (SUV) \$27,000.00, one convertible car seat \$100.00, one infant car seat \$80.00, one booster seat \$60.00 for a total of \$27,240.00, with a 20% county match of \$5,448.00. Ms. Warren said the grant application was due May 19th and award of the grant would be after October 1st.

On motion of Coun. Shealy, seconded by Coun. Daniel, it was unanimously approved for the Grants Coordinator to proceed with the grant application process for VOCA grant funds from the S.C. Department of Public Safety requested by Victim Services for one SUV vehicle, one convertible car seat, one infant car seat, and one booster seat for a total amount of \$27,240.00 with a 20% county match in the amount of \$5,448.00, to be funded from Contingency.

9. On motion of Coun. Miller, seconded by Coun. Butler, it was unanimously approved to appoint Bryan W. Rushton of 166 Rock Hill Road, Saluda to the Saluda County Tax Appeals Board with his first term expiring May 9, 2019.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION

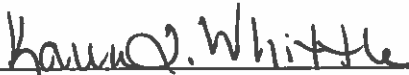
On motion of Coun. Daniel, seconded by Coun. Butler, it was unanimously approved for Council to go into Executive Session Pursuant to Section 30-4-70(a) (1) and (2) of the South Carolina Code of Laws 1976, as amended to discuss personnel and contractual matters and to receive legal advice, to return at the Call of the Chair.

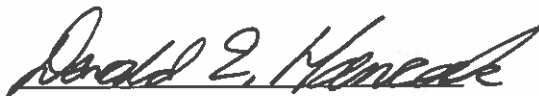
Council returned into open session at the Call of the Chair.


No action came out of Executive Session.

L. ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Coun. Miller, seconded by Coun. Butler, it was unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 P.M.


Karen T. Whittle
Clerk to Council


Donald E. Hancock
Chairman


Date Approved