

JASPER COUNTY/CITY OF HARDEEVILLE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
JOINT MEETING
358 THIRD AVE.
RIDGELAND, SC 29936
JANUARY 12, 2012, 6:00 P.M.
MINUTES

Officials Present – Chairman Samuel Gregory, Vice Chairman Martin L. Sauls IV, Councilman Henry Etheridge, Councilman Theodus Drayton, Councilman LeRoy Blackshear, Mayor Bronco Bostick, Councilman Sweeney, Councilwoman Sherry Carroll, Councilman Sal Arzillo, Councilman Roy Powell, Councilman Grady Woods, Councilman Gary Manzanna, Councilman Jimmy Rhodes, Councilwoman Jo Boyles, Rep. Curtis Brantley, Clerk of Court Margaret Bostick

Staff Present: - Andrew Fulghum, Bob Nanni, George Hood, Judith Frank, Marvin Jones, and David Tedder

In accordance with the freedom of information act the electronic and print media were notified.

During periods of discussion and/or presentations minutes are typically condensed and paraphrased.

DINNER – Dinner was served at 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Gregory and Mayor Bostick called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE- Chairman Gregory led the pledge of allegiance.

INVOCATION – Vice Chairman Sauls gave the invocation.

PRESENTATION OF AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT TO INCLUDE A MAJOR HOTEL COMPLEX- Ralph Teal explained that SB Investment and Development of Myrtle Beach have been working in Jasper County for the past 5 years with Hilton Head Lakes. Mr. Teal said in 2010 they had the opportunity to discuss with a regional lender and they assembled a group from Myrtle Beach and Traditions and created a portfolio. Mr. Teal said that this group joined with the Strafford Group and together they closed on 7,800 acres in December, 2010. Mr. Teal explained that the vision of this group is to create a resort complex with a hotel, a golf course,

restaurants, a gaming complex and a year round sports facility. Mr. Teal said that SBI and the Strafford group partnered with a Native American group of Cherokee Indians in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Mr. Teal said explained that the venue will be located within the 4,600 acre master-planned community of Hilton Head Lakes. Mr. Teal said that this complex would employ 2,250 jobs on the site and 1,600 indirect or induced jobs in the Low County plus 860 jobs elsewhere. In South Carolina with a total impact of 4,700 new jobs statewide, the employee compensation on site will be \$92,000,000, indirect and induced compensation of \$64,000,000 and \$29,000,000 elsewhere in South Carolina for a total of \$184,000,000 statewide. The complex will also generate \$15,700,000 in federal income tax, \$8,400,000 state tax, \$17,400,000 in Employer/Employee payments to Social Security, \$4,000,000 to Employer/Employee payments in Medicare and \$20,300,000 in Sales Tax statewide. Mr. Teal said the partnership can deliver this facility and they are not asking for any incentives. Mr. Brent Wittenberg of Marquette Advisors presented a study that was done for the group. Mr. Wittenberg reviewed the impact that the resort would have on the economy, the increase in jobs, tourism, taxes. Mr. Wittenberg presented slides of the current facilities across the United States. Mr. Wittenberg explained that the steps are mandated by Federal law. Mr. Wittenberg said it will take 6-18 months before it is started. Mr. Teal said the Cherokee Indians are represented at this meeting by the partnership and they partnership speaks on their behalf. Mayor Bostick asked where and what the governor has to do with this. Mr. Teal said they were still gathering information to take to the governor and it will go to her in a couple of months. Tommy Rhodes asked if the partnership spoke with Beaufort County and Mr. Teal responded that they did speak with two people in Beaufort County, but they are starting here in Jasper County because the facility would be located in Jasper County. Mr. Nanni said the impact of the number of jobs and revenue is remarkable. Mr. Nanni said that Hardeeville will do whatever they can do to make this happen. Mr. Nanni said the benefits will outweigh the time spent. Mr. Nanni said the resort will help make other businesses in the area grow. Mr. Nanni said that a rising tide floats all ships. Mr. Nanni said people will come from everywhere to the resort. Mr. Nanni said it is a good business and they need to plan and get ready for it. Mr. Nanni said it would do so much for the people in this area. Mr. Nanni said if you turn your back on this, you don't have the region at heart. Councilman Drayton asked about opposition from people and the religious community. Chairman Gregory said he thinks this is good for the community and Christians go to casinos all over the world. Chairman Gregory said he felt this is a good thing for Jasper County and the people needed jobs. Representative Brantley wanted the people to know that the success of this project does not depend on Beaufort County. Rep. Brantley said that the people of Jasper County need to make decisions for the

betterment of the citizens of Jasper County and the people expect the leaders to provide a better quality of life. Mr. Bostick said the land would have to be sold to the government to hold in trust for the Indians. Mr. Drake said that the partnership has attorneys on Washington D.C. that specialize in this and it falls under the Federal laws. Mr. Drake said they are dedicated to make this happen as soon as possible and the attorney in Washington D.C. will help them navigate through the system. Vice Chairman Sauls said a traffic study was done a few years ago, and he asked that they elaborate what is tax exempt. Mr. Drake said that the property that the casino is located on is tax exempt. Councilman Etheridge asked about law enforcement. Mr. Drake the resort property is subject to the local, state and federal laws. Councilman Etheridge said services will be needed, but no property tax will be paid. Chairman Gregory said they received a lot of information and another workshop needed to be scheduled. Councilman Rhodes asked if the other businesses would pay a fee in lieu of taxes and Mr. Teal responded that the development pays fees to the city. Councilman Powell said this is new to everyone and there will be a lot of public meetings. Chairman Gregory said that everyone should support this and he does support it because it will help Jasper County move forward. Chairman Gregory said they don't need to wait and see if the neighboring counties are in favor of this because it is in Jasper County. Margaret Bostick asked if the banquet halls will be available and affordable for the local citizens to have events. Mr. Teal said the resort facility is for people of all income levels and will be made available to the community. Councilwoman Carroll asked what were their intentions with respects to partnering with the community. Mr. Teal said they are ready and willing to do whatever is needed and what is best for the community. Councilman Manzanna asked if the numbers being projected were conservative. Mr. Wittenberg responded that they were confident in the numbers presented and believe that they are accurate. Mr. Wittenberg said it won't be Disney, but it is very unique opportunity because it is an untapped market. Councilman Woods discussed the increase of traffic and they were not asking for incentives, but what means are being provided for new highways due to the impact of the resort to the area. Mr. Teal responded that they are just in the starting process and they plan to do whatever it takes to make it successful. Councilman Woods commented the 4 million additional guests will make a big impact and needs to be considered. Mr. Teal said that the resort will be attracting visitors year round, not just seasonal visitors. Mr. Teal said this project is on the company's front burner to make it happen as soon as possible. Chairman Gregory said this is a good thing for Jasper County and everyone needs to unite and support the project. Chairman Gregory said that something needs to be done to lower the citizen's taxes. Mayor Bostick said the pros and cons can be discusses, not there is no denying that BMW

had a great effect on Greenville and it attracted other businesses to go there. Mayor Bostick said this resort will have the same effect in our area. Chairman Gregory thanked everyone for their input and said that Jasper County is on the team.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT TO INCLUDE A MAJOR HOTEL COMPLEX –Mr.

Fulghum said that Mr. Nanni and Mr. Tedder have prepared a resolution of support for the project. Mr. Tedder read the resolution. Councilman Blackshear motioned and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion to approve the resolution of support for the economic development project to include a major resort complex and casino. The motion carried with all Jasper County Council members voting in favor.

Councilwoman Carroll motioned and Councilman Arzillo Drayton seconded the motion to approve the resolution of support for the economic development project to include a major resort complex and casino. The motion carried with all Hardeeville City Council members voting in favor.

Vice Chairman Sauls invited the Ridgeland Town Council to be part of the resolution and Councilman Rhodes said that they just became aware of the project they did not want to participate tonight, but they will do a resolution of support at their Thursday meeting.

ADJOURN – Chairman Gregory adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Approved by:

Judith M. Frank, ccc
Clerk to Council

Rev. Samuel Gregory
Chairman