



**JASPER COUNTY
COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
JANUARY 4, 2016
MINUTES**

5:30 P.M.

Officials Present: Chairwoman Barbara Clark, Vice Chairman L. Martin Sauls, IV, Councilman Theodus Drayton, Councilman Henry Etheridge, Councilman D. Thomas Johnson

Staff Present: Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Clerk to Council Judith Frank, Attorney David Tedder, Director of Administrative Services Ronnie Malphrus, Director of Emergency Services Wilbur Daley, Director of Engineering Services Dale Terry, Interim Planning Director Lisa Wagner

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.

Call to Order- Chairwoman Clark called the special called meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Executive Session – Council Conference Room – Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Johnson seconded the motion to go into executive session for the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates 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 –Ridgeland/ Claude Dean Airport. Section 30-4-70 (a)(2). The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Return to Open Session – Councilman Etheridge moved and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion to return to open session. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

No action was taken as a result of executive session.

Pledge of Allegiance - Councilman Drayton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation- Councilman Etheridge gave the invocation.

Approval of Agenda – Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion to approve the agenda. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Approval of the Minutes – 12/01/2014 - Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Etheridge seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Election of Officers

Andrew Fulghum - Election of Chairman – Mr. Fulghum asked for nominations. Chairwoman Clark said she has enjoyed being Chairwoman and she was ready to relinquish the seat to another Council Member. Chairwoman Clark nominated and Councilman Etheridge seconded the nomination of Vice Chairman Sauls. There were no other nominations. L. Martin Sauls, IV was elected as Chairman with all members present voting in favor. Chairman Sauls thanked Councilwoman Clark for the great job she did as Chair of the County Council and he often refers to her as the First Lady of Jasper County and he learned a lot from her. Chairman Sauls said the Councilwoman Clark is dedicated to the County and the County is a better by having her on Council. Chairman Sauls said that Jasper County has a lot of opportunities and challenges and the Council works well together and there is so much to look forward to with economic development projects and the Port.

Chairman – Election of Vice Chairman – Chairman Sauls called for nominations for Vice Chairman. Councilman Etheridge nominated and Councilman Drayton seconded the nomination of D. Thomas Johnson as Vice Chairman. There were no other nominations. D. Thomas Johnson was elected Vice Chairman with all members present voting in favor.

Judge Kleckley administered the oath of office to Chairman Sauls and Vice Chairman Johnson.

Presentation and Proclamations – None.

Ordinances

Lisa Wagner – Public Hearing and 2nd Reading of an Ordinance To amend the Official Zoning Map of Jasper County so as to transfer a property bearing Jasper County Tax Map Number 080-00-01-025 located along Argent Boulevard from the Residential Zone to the General Commercial Zone on the Jasper County Official Zoning Map- Ms. Wagner said the property was located on Argent Blvd. and the zoning change requested is consistent with the comprehensive plan and the Planning Commission recommends approval. Chairman Sauls opened the public hearing. There were no comments. Chairman Sauls closed the public hearing. Councilman Etheridge moved and Councilwoman Clark seconded the motion that this be the Public Hearing and 2nd Reading of an Ordinance To amend the Official Zoning Map of Jasper County so as to transfer a property bearing Jasper County Tax Map Number 080-00-01-025 located along Argent Boulevard from the Residential Zone to the General Commercial Zone on the Jasper County Official Zoning Map. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Resolutions – None.

Old Business – None.

New Business

Ronnie Malphrus- Discussion of manufacturer’s property tax late filing and waiver of penalties –

Mr. Malphrus explained that he met with Mr. Curry of Lowcounty Block and Pavers and Mr. Curry explained that every year the company has to file with the State and the State sends an assessment to the County Assessor. The County Assessor sends a bill based on the assessment. Mr. Malphrus said that the State said they did not receive the form in 2005 and they assessed the penalty for that year and it has been pending ever since and Mr. Curry would like to clear it up. Mr. Malphrus told the Council that Mr. Curry met with Ms. Holmes and told her the State was not going to go back to 2005 and remove the penalty, but if the County Council would remove it, the State would not fight it. Mr. Malphrus said the penalties were about \$35,000. Mr. Malphrus said if the penalties were removed, Mr. Curry will pay the balance of what is owed. Mr. Malphrus reported that when the State contacted Mr. Curry about not receiving the form, he did provide it when he became aware of the penalty and said that he did mail it in previously. Councilman Etheridge asked if the penalty was for 1 year and they put the penalty on and added to it. Mr. Malphrus said he never paid for 2005. Councilman Etheridge asked if he was paying every year. Mr. Malphrus said that he does owe money, but he will bring it up to date if the penalty is removed. Councilman Drayton said he had a problem with removing the penalty because Mr. Cooler asked about removing taxes he owed and they did not remove them and he had to pay. Mr. Malphrus explained that there was not penalty involved with Mr. Cooler, just taxes. Vice Chairman Johnson moved and Councilwoman Clark seconded the motion that in light of the unique situation that this request be treated as a unique situation and to waive the penalty. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Ronnie Malphrus – Presentation of bids for landscaping at the Courthouse and the Government Bldg.

Mr. Malphrus presented the bids from 3 companies and asked the Council to approve the low bid from Oceanwood Landscaping in the amount of \$675 per month. Mr. Malphrus said the Greenery was paid \$667 per month, but they are no longer going to do it. Councilman Drayton said some of the bids included fertilization and insecticides but Oceanwood Landscaping did not. Mr. Malphrus said it would cost \$110 more per month or can be done as needed. Vice Chairman Johnson asked who was doing it now and Mr. Malphrus responded Mark's Landscaping did it in December. Mr. Malphrus said the contract can be cancelled with 30 days notice. Councilwoman Clark moved and Vice Chairman Johnson seconded the motion to approve the bid from Oceanwood Landscaping. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Committee Reports – Councilwoman Clark thanked EMS for including the Council at their Holiday celebration. **Councilman Etheridge** reported that he attended several Holiday celebrations and that Hardeeville is very excited about the new library. Councilman Etheridge said that he and Councilwoman Clark went to the festival of lights with the Council on Aging and they had a very good time. Councilman Etheridge added that 2015 was a very good year. **Councilman Drayton** thanked Sandy Fowler for her presentation on the Promise Zone that she did in Robertville. **Chairman Sauls** recognized Hardeeville Councilman Harry Weaver. Chairman Sauls said the State of the County Breakfast was coming and that State House day is being scheduled. Chairman Sauls said he was very excited about the new year and great things were happening in economic development and the Jasper County Port. Chairman Sauls said the Council planned to put extra emphasis on law enforcement to make Jasper County a safer place and they will be working with the Sheriff and the two municipal police chiefs.

Administrator's Report- Mr. Fulghum said his report was provided for information. Councilwoman Clark asked about the status of the ankle monitoring program. Mr. Fulghum said Mr. Benjamin was working on it and it is hard getting it started. Vice Chairman Johnson said it a great cost saving tool. Vice Chairman Johnson said perhaps a meeting with the magistrates was needed. Vice Chairman Johnson said it cost approximately \$60 per day per inmate to house them in the detention center regardless of the crime and with the monitoring system the County would be saving a large amount of money that could be used elsewhere.

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 – Chairman Sauls opened the floor to the public. **Priscilla Frazier** told the Council that there is a company that is located next to her home and they start making a lot of noise about 6:30 a.m. every day of the week including Saturday and Sunday. Ms. Frazier said she wanted to know what was going on. Chairman Sauls said Ms. Wagner would get in touch with her and she will find out what is going on. Being no further comments, Chairman Sauls closed the floor to the public.

Attorney Tedder asked the Council to approve the 2016 County Council Meeting Schedule. Councilwoman Clark moved and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion to approve the 2016 County Council Meeting Schedule. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Adjourn - Councilwoman Clark moved and Councilman Etheridge seconded the motion adjourn the meeting. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

The meeting ended at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Approved by:

Judith M. Frank, ccc
Clerk to Council

L. Martin Sauls, IV
Chairman