



**JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL
J.C. GOVERNMENT BLDG.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
May 5, 2014**

MINUTES

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

STAFF PRESENT: Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Clerk to Council Judith Frank, Attorney Marvin Jones, Director of Administrative Services Ronnie Malphrus, Director of Emergency Services Wilbur Daley, Director of Engineering Services Dale Terry, Planning Director LeNolon Edge, Assessor Susan Waite, Business License Coordinator Renty Kitty

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 Budget Workshop/Meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

4:00 p.m. -Jasper County School Board- Mr. Gary West provided handouts of the budget and copies of a slide presentation that explained the way all the schools code their budgets. Mr. West thanked the 3 Council members that attended the School Board's budget workshop and explained that the School Board attended 3 additional budget workshops. Mr. West provided the Council information regarding the 2,780 students and their ethnic background. Mr. West advised the Council that the School's budget has an increase cap of 4.36% over what was given last year. Mr. West discussed the expenditures and the increase in the budget for legal fees. Councilman Johnson questioned the increase in legal fees, and Mr. West said that there has been more legal action against the district and the district has filed 2 claims against others. Councilman Johnson asked if it was a contingent fee agreement regarding the building issues. Councilman Johnson said that \$225,000 is listed twice and was the total \$450,000 or \$225,000. Mr. West said it was the same amount and he provided information on the accounting system used by all the school districts. Mr. West said this year's request is 2% over what was budgeted last year. Councilman Etheridge asked if the teachers' salaries made up 34 % of the budget and Mr. West said that percentage also included the benefits and classified salaries. Councilman Etheridge asked if the State required enough teachers to have classroom size of 30 students. Mr. West said if they did not have that, the school would lose certain types of funding. Mr. West provided information on the program IN\$ITE and what it provided. Mr. West also gave the Council a list of all the employees at each school and at the district office. Councilman Etheridge asked about the training in the HR department. Mr. West said it was for the staff to travel within the district and state meetings. Councilman Etheridge said travel expenses seem to be an awful lot for the taxpayers to be paying. Mr. West said the Superintendent's car

allowance is also included in her travel line. Vice Chairman Sauls congratulated the school district for winning the Palmetto Achievement Award. Vice Chairman Sauls said travel and training is very high in a lot of the departments and is all this training necessary and can it be cut and the money put back in the classrooms. Mr. West said they use webinars whenever they can. Superintendent Washington said that once the grants are approved they are required to attend the classes in order to retain the grant and personnel are also required to attend. Mr. West said they are also trying to contact others to come to the schools. Vice Chairman Sauls said that for the past two months the American Express bill was \$20,531 in March and \$15,000 in April. Superintendent Washington said the grants pay for that. Vice Chairman Sauls asked about expenditure at the Swan and Dolphin at Disney World. Mr. West said that was for training for the guidance counselor. Vice Chairman Sauls commented that \$4,000 is budgeted for travel for each of the School Board members. Vice Chairman Sauls asked when was the last time the bus drivers received a raise. Mr. West said the bus drivers received a 3.1% increase and the Cafeteria is paid for from federal funds. Superintendent Washington said the district bus drivers are paid a little better than the bus drivers in the surrounding area. Superintendent Washington added that they work 3 hours and get paid for 6 hours. Vice Chairman Sauls asked about a check to the sheriff and Superintendent Washington said that is for a contract. Councilman Johnson commented that the only thing that went down in the budget was what was funded to ACE. Mr. West said that 2% was added last year and this year they reviewed the budget and they will pay the 1/3 as the law requires. Councilman Johnson asked about the future of ACE and Mr. West said he did not have any information on that. Mr. West said the students must be enrolled in the school of origin and if they ride the bus, they must ride the bus back to the school. Superintendent Washington said the funding is tied into it and several students from THA go there and they come to Jasper County so they know there are no open seats. Councilman Drayton asked about repairs and maintenance. Mr. West said that the calculation is done by school and they estimate \$20 per student and allocate it to maintenance and new items requested by the administration. Chairwoman Clark said that there was an increase of \$50,000 for legal fees requested and she asked for a report and explanation of how the \$175,000 that was in the budget was spent. Mr. West said he would provide the information after he checks with the attorney regarding the information requested. Chairwoman Clark said that she felt that was an exceptional amount of money for legal fees. Mr. West said the School District initiated two lawsuits and they feel the return will be greater than the expense. Mr. West said others have filed lawsuits against the School District. Chairwoman Clark asked about the media specialist and media clerk being cancelled. Mr. West said that will be corrected. Chairwoman Clark asked about security at the Central Office and not at the Schools. Mr. West said that \$35,000 is budgeted and at the school there is a desk and no one can get to the back of the building without passing the desk. Mr. West said they were trying to protect the employees. Mr. West said they will be going to the swipe card system. Chairwoman Clark said the Directors travel more than she has ever seen and she asked when do they help the students. Superintendent Washington said the grants require a site person to attend and a particular person is assigned by division and after attending the training that person comes back and trains and educates the others. The division person is sent for secondary education and a central person is sent so she can train a group of people. Superintendent Washington said they have an audit team to make sure everything is done to

comply with the grant requirements. Chairwoman Clark asked where the in house suspension counselor is listed in the budget. Mr. West said the position is listed in the budget under paraprofessionals as the PBIS Coordinator. Mr. West said the position is in the high school and the middle school. Chairwoman Clark said it is not a teaching position. Chairwoman Clark asked about the Superintendent's car allowance and Mr. West said the information is located on page 70. Chairwoman Clark asked why the School Board is the only entity that does not have their meetings recorded. Mr. West said it is not included in the budget. Superintendent Washington said that they are working on the infrastructure to do this and currently it is not coverage that everyone can receive. Chairwoman Clark said everyone comes to the Council for funding and while the Council would like to fund them, it is impossible without increasing taxes. Councilman Johnson asked if the School District had any definitive numbers regarding the Hardeeville High School Mr. West said he did not have information on that. Mr. West thanked the Council for hearing their request and for asking good questions. Superintendent Washington said that it is expensive to educate the children and they must accept any student that comes to their door. Bertie Riley, School Board Chair, thanked the Council and said the Council asked good questions and Mr. West provided all the facts. Councilman Etheridge thanked Mr. West for doing a good job and for providing good information.

Chairwoman Clark closed the budget workshop at 5:30 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM

Executive Session

Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other business in the area served by a public body – Project Update- Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Etheridge seconded the motion to go into executive session for the Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other business in the area served by a public body – Project Update. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

DINNER BREAK

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION – Councilman Etheridge moved and Vice Chairman Sauls seconded the motion to return to open session. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Call to Order –Chairwoman Clark called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

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

Invocation- Vice Chairman Sauls gave the invocation.

General Statement- At the beginning of the Council meeting Chairwoman Clark addressed Gregory's Facebook post. Chairwoman Clark stated the she received many phone calls and questions about Mr. Gregory's Facebook post. Chairwoman Clark said she wanted the people

of Jasper County to know that she does not condone racism, and that the Council is a sound Council and they do not condone racism. Chairwoman Clark said she wanted the public to know that the Council is here for all the people regardless of the color of your skin. "I am going to make a general statement. I've had many calls, knocks on doors, questions asked as I go to and fro about my day. I want the people of Jasper County to know that as chairman of this council, a sound council, we do not in any way condone racism. Chairwoman Clark stated that "We want you to know that we are here to work for all of the people regardless of the color of your skin because everyone looks the same on the inside". Chairman Clark said the Council was ashamed, but hoped that this would be put to rest. Chairwoman Clark said she was taught that you should never look down on anyone unless you are going to take him by the hand and help him up. Chairwoman Clark said the most appalling thing to her was that this individual works in a school where there are children of all ethnic backgrounds. Chairwoman Clark said she wanted the public to know that the Council stands firm and that whatever the Council votes on, they are voting for what they think will be good for everyone.

Approval of the Minutes – 04/15/2014 and 04/21/2014 – Councilman Drayton moved and Councilman Johnson seconded the motion to approve the minutes of 4/15/2014 and 4/21/2014 County Council meetings. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Approval of the 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.

Presentations

Rev. Ring- Volunteering in Schools- Rev. Ring explained that he was working with United Way on a program called *Lowcounty Reads* and they are trying to get everyone reading. Rev. Ring said that 2/3 of the children who cannot read by 3rd grade end up in jail or on welfare. Rev. Ring said they were recruiting volunteers and they were focusing on children in the 1-3 grades. Rev. Ring said that by 4th grade the children are reading to learn. Rev. Ring said that 67% of the students in 8 schools do not read on their grade level. Rev. Ring said their goal is that by 2022 those students entering the 3rd grade will be proficient. Rev. Ring added that they hope to decrease the dropout rate. Rev. Ring said they are recruiting volunteers to help with this program and the volunteers will have background checks, tutoring conferences, and mandatory training. Rev. Ring said they have children, they have books, but they need volunteers. Rev. Ring said more information was available through the United Way.

Stacey Kirk – Regarding the Sheriff's Department – Ms. Kirk stated that the Sheriff told her that he only has 3 deputies each shift to cover the entire County. Ms. Kirk said her home has been burglarized twice and last November Ms. James told the Council she was having the same problem. Ms. Kirk said the Sheriff told her he has had the same number of people working for him for the past 20 years and the issue is that he does not get enough money from the County Council who manages and distributes the funds to the Sheriff's office. Ms. Kirk told the Council that the Sheriff told her he has not had a budget increase in 20 years. Ms. Kirk said the crime is getting worse and you feel violated when someone breaks into your home. Councilman Etheridge commented that the Sheriff has had his budget increased and he has less area to

cover since certain areas have annexed into the municipalities. Vice Chairman Sauls said last year the Council approved an additional \$240,000 for new vehicles and equipment for the Sheriff's Department. Chairwoman Clark explained that the Council approved the funds for the Sheriff's Department, but the Council cannot tell the Sheriff how to spend the money. Chairwoman Clark said funding for two additional officers was added to the Sheriff's budget so that 4 deputies would be available to patrol at night. Councilman Johnson commented that the Council appropriates the funds to the Sheriff's office that are received through taxes. Councilman Johnson said the citizens can give the Council feedback as to what they feel is needed in the County. Councilman Johnson said that commercial development is the solution to lowering taxes on people's homes. Councilman Drayton said the Sheriff is an elected official and he can distribute the funds appropriated to his department as he sees fit. Councilman Drayton added that the Sheriff is a very independent person and it is common practice to blame the Council. Chairwoman Clark thanked Ms. Kirk for coming. Chairwoman Clark reminded the public that the Sheriff does not have to hire additional deputies if they approve additional funding for his department. Chairwoman Clark said the Sheriff is in control of the funding he receives and the Council cannot tell him how it must be spent.

Ordinances

Ronnie Malphrus – Public Hearing and 3rd Reading of an Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of Certain Instruments Relating to the Acquisition, Construction, Equipping, Use, Leasing, and Renovation of Certain County Facilities; Approving the Issuance of St. Peters Parish/Jasper County Public Facilities Corporation Instalment Purchase Revenue Bonds; Consenting to the Form of a Second Supplemental Trust Agreement Between St. Peters Parish/Jasper County Public Facilities Corporation and the U.S. Bank National Association as Corporate Trustee; Authorising the Execution and Delivery of a First Amendatory Public Facilities Purchase and Occupancy Agreement Between Jasper County and St. Peters Parish/Jasper County Public Facilities Corporation; and Other Matters Relating Thereto- Mr. Malphrus said that this ordinance is to approve permanent financing for long term basis in an amount not to exceed \$2,700,000. Mr. Malphrus said a little more was added in case of an emergency from now until the bond is closed. Chairwoman Clark opened the public hearing. David Arnal asked why the financing was being done separately and Mr. Malphrus responded that this is an instalment purchase bond and the other financing is for the School District. Being no further comments, Chairwoman Clark closed the floor to the public. Councilman Etheridge moved and Vice Chairman Sauls seconded the motion that this be the Public Hearing and 3rd Reading of an Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of Certain Instruments Relating to the Acquisition, Construction, Equipping, Use, Leasing, and Renovation of Certain County Facilities; Approving the Issuance of St. Peters Parish/Jasper County Public Facilities Corporation Instalment Purchase Revenue Bonds; Consenting to the Form of a Second Supplemental Trust Agreement Between St. Peters Parish/Jasper County Public Facilities Corporation and the U.S. Bank National Association as Corporate Trustee; Authorising the Execution and Delivery of a First Amendatory Public Facilities Purchase and Occupancy Agreement Between Jasper County and St. Peters Parish/Jasper County Public Facilities Corporation; and Other Matters Relating Thereto. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

LeNolon Edge –Public Hearing and 2nd Reading of Ordinance to Amend the Official Zoning Map of Jasper County so as to Transfer Property Bearing Jasper County Tax Map Number 039-00-05-032 located at 8406 Speedway Blvd. from the Community Commercial Zone to the Industrial Development Zone of the Jasper County Official Zoning Map- Mr. Edge provided the location of the property and told the Council that the property was currently zoned Community Commercial. Mr. Edge said that a lot of the properties around it are zoned commercial, residential, industrial development and there is vacant land near the property. Chairwoman Clark opened the public hearing. **Barbara Bartoldus** commented it is objectionable to spot zone and there was much discussion about this when the zoning ordinance was written. Ms. Bartoldus said that you throw the public into the garbage can when spot zoning is done. Mr. Edge showed other properties in this area that are zoned industrial development. **Louise Rawling** asked what will go in there and Mr. Edge said that anything that is allowed in an industrial zone can go there. Mr. Edge said the company plans to enlarge the building and have a manufacturing business inside the building. Ms. Rawling asked about the residential homes in that area. Mr. Edge said the public hearing was advertised, the neighbors were notified and the property was posted. Ms. Rawling said she was concerned because this type of thing has happened to her family. Being no further comments, Chairwoman Clark closed the public hearing. Councilman Johnson said he did not feel this was spot zoning. Mr. Edge said it was not spot zoning and if it annexed into Hardeeville it could be industrial. Chairman Etheridge said on the map he had, the property in Hardeeville is a PDD and he asked if Hardeeville changed the zoning. Mr. Edge said if the PDD is looked at you can tell what it is designated for, like the marble place. Mr. Edge said the entire PDD is zoned industrial. Councilman Etheridge said only the port and the power plant are zoned industrial and he was concerned about the residents and he planned on visiting the area where the proposed business would be located. Mr. Edge said that there needed to be 1,000 ft. from residential properties when you have an industrial zoned piece of property. Mr. Edge said there are also protections in place. Councilman Etheridge asked if anything allowed in industrial zoning can be placed there and Mr. Edge said that a site plan would be reviewed and it would have to be permitted. Councilman Etheridge said he talked to the Planning Commission members and they said they turned it down because it was to be used for transportation and warehouse distribution. Councilman Johnson said that the Limehouse area is a very active commercial district. Councilman Johnson added that the property is bound on the West by a 4 lane highway and on the East by Hwy. 17 and the property is not located in a quiet neighborhood. Councilman Johnson said that Commercial Development will lower the taxes in the County. Chairwoman Clark said if the developer sells the property, the planning department can make sure that whatever goes in there is in the law. Chairwoman Clark said that currently the area is mostly commercial and that the property is grandfathered in as commercial. Councilman Johnson moved and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion that this be the Public Hearing and 2nd Reading of Ordinance to Amend the Official Zoning Map of Jasper County so as to Transfer Property Bearing Jasper County Tax Map Number 039-00-05-032 located at 8406 Speedway Blvd. from the Community Commercial Zone to the Industrial Development Zone of the Jasper County Official Zoning Map. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

LeNolon Edge – Public Hearing and 2nd Reading of the Ordinance to Adopt the Exit 8 Master Plan for Jasper County – Mr. Edge said they have been working of the Exit 8 Master Plan for quite a while and it was presented at the Joint Councils Meeting. Mr. Edge said this is a joint effort of the County and Hardeeville. Mr. Edge said they have been working with the Alliance Group and ROI on this plan. Mr. Golding discussed the goals, data collection and feedback. Mr. Golding said that they spoke with 109 property owners and it was a joint effort. Mr. Golding said that jurisdictional districts were established and they did a comparison of the corridor overlay district and the consistency of sign height. Mr. Golding said they identified large tracts involved in Jasper County and the City of Hardeeville. Mr. Golding covered the executive summary including the infrastructure. Mr. Golding highlighted the next steps that are needed to complete the plan so that they create a sense of arrival. Mr. Fergusio commented that banners at the exits and signage on concrete triangular road dividers will create the sense of arrival. Mr. Fergusio discussed bike lanes, and some water features at the exits as well as landscape enhancements. Phase 1 of Jasper’s Crossing was also discussed. Kevin Fergusio discussed the aesthetic analysis and said they explored the existing assets. Chairwoman Clark opened the public hearing. David Arnal applauded the Council, staff and engineers for the job they did and he said there is so much opportunity at Exit 8 and it was good news for the County. Mr. Arnal said that the economy is coming back and Exit 8 is the front door into Hilton Head and a good tax base will be created. Mr. Arnal said this was a good opportunity to transform Exit 8 and that the buyers were out there. Being no further comments, Chairwoman Clark closed the public hearing. Councilman Drayton moved and Vice Chairman Sauls seconded the motion that this be the Public Hearing and 2nd Reading of the Ordinance to Adopt the Exit 8 Master Plan for Jasper County. Councilman Johnson said the maps are only illustrations and concepts to create a vision and the landowners can still do what they want. Mr. Edge said that this only creates the framework and it would not take the property rights from anyone. Chairwoman Clark said the community was very involved with the project. Mr. Fulghum thanked the City of Hardeeville for getting this started and he said that no one wants to miss this opportunity. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Andrew Fulghum - 1st Reading of the Ordinance Adopting and Approving the Jasper County Capital and Operations Budget for FY 2014-2015 (by title only) – Mr. Fulghum provided the Council with a draft copy of the staff recommended budget for their review. Mr. Fulghum said the value of the mil has increased from 101 to 106.5 and there would be no millage increase. Mr. Fulghum said the budget is for \$22,948,566 and he listed the new equipment that is included in the budget. Mr. Fulghum said there is not a cost of living increase for the employees in the budget and no new employees were added. Mr. Fulghum provided the adoption schedule. Chairwoman Clark asked about the pay raise for the employees. Mr. Fulghum said a lot of items are coming together, but a pay raise was not included in the budget he was recommending. Mr. Fulghum said the employees have only had one percentage increase in 7 years. Mr. Fulghum said that each percentage increase is about \$90,000, but he said he was sure that the employees would appreciate an increase. Councilman Johnson moved Ordinance Adopting and Approving the Jasper County Capital and Operations Budget for FY 2014-2015 (by title only). The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Resolutions- There were no resolutions.

Old Business – There was no old business.

New Business

Andrew Fulghum – Approval of Term Sheet for Fire Service Contracts – Mr. Fulghum presented the term sheets for the fire service contracts. Mr. Fulghum said he recommended a term of 5 years at \$205,000 per year and the area of coverage will not be changed. Mr. Fulghum said that the Levy Fire Contract needed additional work and was not included for approval. Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion to approve the term sheets for the Hardeeville and Ridgeland Fire Service Contracts. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Ronnie Malphrus – Approval of A-Tax Committee Recommendations – Mr. Malphrus presented the recommendations of the A-Tax Committee. Mr. Malphrus said the total of \$98,000 is \$21,000 less than they received last year. Mr. Malphrus said that the law requires that the County get \$25,000 plus \$3,650 and the Chamber gets \$21,900 in addition to the amount recommended from the balance. The recommendations for the balance of the \$48,183 funds were - \$17,500 for the Chamber of Commerce, \$22,173 for the Point South Merchants, \$4,060 for Lowcountry Tourism, \$1,000 for the Gopher Hill Festival, \$1,000 for the Catfish Festival, \$2,000 for the Blue Heron Nature Center, and \$450 for the Sons of the Confederate Vets. Mr. Malphrus provided the total breakdown of the funding including the \$733 carry forward and said the funds must be used to enhance tourism. Councilman Etheridge moved and Vice Chairman Sauls seconded the motion to approve the A-Tax Committee recommendations as presented. The motion carried with Chairwoman Clark, Vice Chairman Sauls, and Councilmen Johnson and Etheridge voting for; Councilman Drayton voted against.

Committee Reports – Councilman Drayton reported that he attended 3 events including the Tarboro Homecoming and it was a great success. Councilman Drayton said he attended the Joint Council Meeting and the School District Budget Workshop. Councilman Johnson said he attended the Joint Council Meeting and the Hardeeville Fishing Rodeo. Councilman Johnson said he attended an event held by the Sons of the Confederate Vets and it was a very educational event. Councilman Johnson added that the event was a reenactment and everyone enjoyed it and it was not a controversial event. Councilman Etheridge thanked Mr. West for breaking down the School District's Budget. Councilman Etheridge said he attended the Joint Council Meeting and he felt more meetings like this were needed. Vice Chairman Sauls reported that he attended Mayor Bostick's Bike Ride for Diabetes, Jasper on the Move, The American Cancer Society Walk for a Cure and Palmetto Electric Appreciation Day. Chairwoman Clark said she did everything the other Council Members did and she attended the Living Legend Dinner. Chairwoman Clark said she attended Court one day and the Council is working very hard. Chairman Clark announced that the Hardeeville Community Center was vandalized.

Administrator's Report – Mr. Fulghum said the Solicitor is requesting that an additional \$9,000 be added to his budget request. Mr. Fulghum said the Runway Project will have a public hearing between 4:00-8:00 p.m. at the Ridgeland/Hardeeville High School. Mr. Fulghum told the Council that the grant award for professional services is at the 80% rate. Mr. Daley announced that he will be starting Hurricane Preparedness Training. Mr. Edge reported that the information regarding the airport is available online on the County's website. Mr. Edge said the Exit 8 plan was presented at the Joint Council Meeting and public meetings were held to solicit input from the citizens. Mr. Edge told the Council that the citizens' comments were incorporated into the plan. Mr. Edge said the plan would be presented to the Planning Commission at their next meeting.

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- Chairwoman Clark opened the floor to the public. There were no comments. Chairwoman Clark closed the floor to the public.

Adjourn – Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

The meeting ended at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Judith M. Frank, ccc
Clerk to Council

Approved by:

Barbara B. Clark
Chairman