



## JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL

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### JASPER COUNTY GOVERNMENT BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS BUDGET WORKSHOP

JUNE 10, 2009

2:30 P.M.

MINUTES

#### **OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

GEORGE HOOD, CHAIRMAN  
HENRY ETHERIDGE, COUNCILMAN  
REV. SAMUEL GREGORY, COUNCILMAN

#### **OFFICIALS ABSENT:**

LEROY BLACKSHEAR, VICE CHAIRMAN  
HUBERT TYLER, COUNCILMAN

#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

ANDREW FULGHUM, ADMINISTRATOR  
RONNIE MALPHRUS, DEP. ADM. ADM. SERVICES  
JUDITH FRANK, CLERK TO COUNCIL  
MARVIN JONES, ATTORNEY

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:**

CHAIRMAN HOOD CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:45 P.M.

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

CHAIRMAN HOOD LED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

#### **INVOCATION:**

COUNCILMAN GREGORY GAVE THE INVOCATION.

#### **BUDGET DISCUSSION:**

##### **ROSEMARY O'QUINN- J.C. HISTORICAL SOCIETY:**

ROSEMARY O'QUINN, PRESIDENT OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INFORMED THE COUNCIL THAT EACH YEAR THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PAYS THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE \$2,500.00 TO KEEP THE DOORS OPEN TO THE MUSEUM AREA. MS. O'QUINN EXPLAINED THAT THE

ONLY INCOME THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAD WAS MEMBERSHIP DUES. MS. O'QUINN REQUESTED THAT THE COUNCIL CONSIDER PAYING THE CHAMBER THE \$2,500.00 AND IF THEY CANNOT DO IT THIS YEAR, PERHAPS, THEY CAN FUND IT NEXT YEAR. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THEY PAID THIS TO THE CHAMBER JUST TO KEEP THE HISTORICAL AREA OPEN. MS. O'QUINN RESPONDED THAT THE CHAMBER ALSO SOLD BOOKS FOR THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THAT THE AREA WILL NOT BE LOCKED IN THE PERRY HOUSE. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THE COUNCIL COULD APPROVE A-TAX TO COVER THE REQUEST. MR. MALPHRUS SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO THE GUIDELINES.

**MICHAEL SMITH AND DOUG GREEN - RIDGELAND LITTLE LEAGUE FOOTBALL:**

MR. LAWYER REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF THE RIDGELAND LITTLE LEAGUE FOOTBALL PROGRAM AND THAT OVER 130 BOYS PARTICIPATE AND THEY HAVE NEVER RECEIVED ANY FUNDING FROM THE COUNTY. MR. LAWYER TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT EVEN THOUGH HIS CHILDREN ARE GROWN HE CONTINUES TO BE VERY ACTIVE IN THE ORGANIZATION. MR. LAWYER SAID THAT EVERYONE WHO WORKS WITH THE FOOTBALL PROGRAM IS A VOLUNTEER AND THIS GROUP HAS HELPED TO CHANGE CHILDREN'S LIVES. MR. LAWYER SAID THEY WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR WHATEVER HELP THE COUNTY COULD PROVIDE.

**ADMINISTRATION - UPDATE:**

MR. FULGHUM ASKED MR. MALPHRUS TO GIVE A RUNDOWN OF THE CHANGES. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THE MILLS ARE UP FROM 249 MILLS TO 267 MILLS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE CHANGES APPROVED BY COUNCIL HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE BUDGET. MR. MALPHRUS SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO NAIL DOWN THE APPROPRIATIONS. MR. MALPHRUS DISCUSSED THE SOLICITOR'S REQUEST AND SAID THAT HE HAD IT AT \$74,500.00 AND THE SOLICITOR SAID HE NEEDED FOR IT TO BE BACK TO THE \$90,000.00 THAT HE RECEIVED LAST YEAR SO THAT NO SERVICES WILL HAVE TO BE CUT. MR. MALPHRUS REPORTED THAT HE MADE THE CHANGE TO THE APPROPRIATION TO THE DELEGATION OFFICE. MR. MALPHRUS REPORTED THAT HE SPOKE WITH THE COUNCIL ON AGING AND THE \$100,000.00 APPROPRIATION WAS FINE. MR. FULGHUM COMMENTED THAT THE BUDGET WILL HAVE A MULTI-YEAR IMPACT ON THE CITIZENS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID HE RECEIVED AN ESTIMATE ON THE TIMBER AT THE PARK AND IT CAME IN AT \$275,000.00. MR. MALPHRUS ASKED TO PUT \$250,000.00 INTO THE BUDGET TO REDUCE THE CASH CARRY FORWARD. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID

HE WAS STILL CONCERNED ABOUT THE EMPLOYEES PAYING THEIR INSURANCE. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THE \$250,000.00 RESULTING FROM THE EMPLOYEES PAYING FOR THEIR INSURANCE IS INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THE COUNTY WILL BE IN WORSE SHAPE NEXT YEAR IF THEY USE CASH CARRY FORWARD FUNDS THIS YEAR. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THAT IT IS A SMALL AMOUNT THAT THE EMPLOYEES WILL HAVE TO PAY. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID SOME OF THE EMPLOYEES MAKE A SMALL SALARY AND IF THEY ARE SELLING THE TIMBER, THE EMPLOYEES WOULD SEE THAT THE COUNCIL IS TRYING TO HELP THEM. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD HAVE LOOKED AT THE PICTURE BEFORE THE COUNTY GOT IN THIS MESS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT IF THINGS DON'T TURN AROUND, MORE PEOPLE WILL HAVE TO BE LAID OFF NEXT YEAR. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE FELT A SALARY STUDY SHOULD BE DONE TO COMPARE THE COUNTY SALARIES TO OTHERS IN THE AREA. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE COUNTY IS IN THIS SITUATION BECAUSE THINGS WERE NOT WATCHED AND THE COUNTY WOULD NOT BE IN THIS SITUATION IF THEY HAD BEEN MORE CONSERVATIVE. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT THE COUNTY HAS SOME HIGH PAID EMPLOYEES AND PEOPLE SHOULD BE PAID WHAT THEY ARE WORTH AND NOW ALL THE MONEY IS GONE AND THEY WANT TO CUT THE LOW PAID PEOPLE. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT THE COUNCIL NEEDS TO BE MORE WATCHFUL OF WHAT IS BEING PRESENTED TO THEM. COUNCILMAN GREGORY ADDED THAT BEFORE ANY HIGH PAID EMPLOYEE IS HIRED, THE COUNCIL SHOULD APPROVE IT. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THE COUNCIL APPROVED THE SALARIES. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THEY SHOULD CONSIDER REDUCING THE HIGH PAYING SALARIES. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT HE WANTED THE COUNCIL TO KNOW WHERE THEY STOOD. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT IF THEY ARE IN THIS SAME POSITION NEXT YEAR, HE WILL NOT BE VOTING TO ELIMINATE THE LOW PAYING POSITIONS. MR. MALPHRUS TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT IF THINGS DON'T CHANGE, THERE WILL BE NOTHING IN THE CASH CARRY FORWARD. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THAT THE DETENTION CENTER WAS GOING TO BREAK THE COUNTY AND IT NEEDED TO BE WATCHED. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THEY MET WITH THE SOLICITOR AND THEY ARE GOING TO GIVE 1<sup>ST</sup> PRIORITY TO THE INMATES IN JUST CARE. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THEY ONLY BUDGETED \$200,000.00 FOR JUST CARE NEXT YEAR AND HE HOPED THE NEW PROGRAM WILL WORK. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THEY MADE THE CUTS BY SENIORITY AND PART-TIME HELP, BUT HE SEES THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS USING CAPITALIZING EXPENSES ON THE COURTHOUSE AS A CRUTCH AND HE DID NOT WANT TO SEE THAT

HAPPENING. MR. FULGHUM RESPONDED THAT HE WANTED TO DISCUSS THAT TODAY AND THERE ARE WAYS THAT ARE ACCEPTABLE TO HANDLE IT AND IT WOULD BE A ONE TIME DECISION. CHAIRMAN HOOD DISCUSSED THE SALARIES AND SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATOR'S SALARY IS LOWER THAN THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATOR AND THE HARDEEVILLE ADMINISTRATOR. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE FELT THAT IF PEOPLE WERE DOING THEIR JOB, HE DID NOT THINK THEY WERE OVERPAID. CHAIRMAN HOOD ADDED THAT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES ARE PAID MUCH HIGHER THAN COUNTY EMPLOYEES. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE WAS TIRED OF PUTTING OUT FIRES AND HE WANTED TO DO A COMPARISION OF SALARIES SO THAT PEOPLE CAN TALK WITH FACTS. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID PEOPLE NEED TO STOP SAYING THINGS THAT ARE NOT FACTUAL. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THAT THERE MAY BE TOO MANY TOP LEVEL PEOPLE AND SOME OF THE RESPONSIBILITY COULD BE COMBINED. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THE COUNCIL NEEDS TO DO A JOB ANALYSIS. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE DID NOT THINK THEY SHOULD CHANGE THE EMPLOYEES PAYING FOR THEIR INSURANCE AND IT IS NO FREE RIDE AND THE EMPLOYEES SHOULD HAVE BEEN USED TO PAYING FOR INSURANCE. CHAIRMAN HOOD INFORMED THE COUNCIL THAT HE SPOKE WITH THE SOLICITOR AND THE SOLICITOR DID NOT THINK HE COULD MAKE IT ON \$74,500.00 BASED ON THE CASE LOAD. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE RECOMMENDED THAT THE AMOUNT BE AMENDED IF IT IS NEEDED LATER IN THE YEAR. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE HOPED THAT THE REVENUE PICKED UP AND IF A FINE IS ISSUED, IT SHOULD BE PAID.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE TAXES BEING INCREASED FOR THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THE CITIZENS ARE NOT MAKING AS MUCH AND HE HOPED THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE A NEED FOR AN ADDITIONAL TAX INCREASE NEXT YEAR. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THEY PREPARED A COMPARISON TO SHOW THE OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE BUSINESSES ARE HIT HARDER THAN THE RESIDENTS. MR. FULGHUM STATED THAT THERE WOULD BE AN OUT OF POCKET DIFFERENCE OF \$11.08 PER MONTH ON A HOME VALUED AT \$150,000.00. MR. FULGHUM TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT IS WHERE THE COUNCIL'S FOCUS SHOULD BE. COUNCILMAN GREGORY RESPONDED THAT EVEN THOUGH THE TAXES MAY BE LOWER THAN OTHER AREAS, THE PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTY DO NOT HAVE HIGH INCOMES. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT SOME PEOPLE MAY MAKE \$40,000.00, BUT A LOT OF THE PEOPLE ARE ONLY MAKING \$20,000.00. COUNCILMAN GREGORY STATED THAT THE ADMINISTRATOR MAY NOT BE THE HIGHEST PAID IN THE COUNTY, BUT WHAT HE MAKES IS A LOT TO SOMEONE WHO IS ONLY MAKING

\$15,000.00-\$18,000.00 PER YEAR. COUNCILMAN GREGORY ADDED THAT THE PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTY NEED INDUSTRY WITH HIGHER PAYING JOBS. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE AGREED THAT HE WANTED TO WORK ON ATTRACTING INDUSTRY TO JASPER COUNTY. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT THE HIGHER PAID POSITIONS MAY NOT MAKE AS MUCH AS THE PEOPLE IN HARDEEVILLE, BUT COMPARED TO THE SALARIES OF THE CITIZENS OF JASPER COUNTY THE ADMINISTRATION SALARIES ARE TOP SALARIES AND SEEING SOME OF THE OTHER SALARIES, THE PEOPLE ARE NOT PAID WELL. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE DISAGREED BECAUSE THE JOB'S RESPONSIBILITY NEEDS TO BE FACTORED AND PEOPLE NEED TO BETTER THEMSELVES BY GOING TO SCHOOL IF THEY WANT HIGHER PAYING JOBS.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED ABOUT THE \$2,500.00 FOR COUNCIL DUES. HE COMMENTED THAT HE FELT THAT IT WAS TOO HIGH. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT WAS NEW TO THIS YEAR'S BUDGET AND HE WAS NOT SURE WHY IT WAS ADDED. MR. MALPHRUS ADDED THAT IT MAY BE TO JOIN NACO SINCE THE COUNCIL IS NOT A MEMBER OF NACO.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED ABOUT THE NEW PERSONNEL FOR THE FARMERS' MARKET AND MR. MALPHRUS ANSWERED THAT CLEMSON HANDLED IT LAST YEAR AND WILL NOT BE DOING IT THIS YEAR. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THERE WAS SOMEONE WHO WAS ALREADY ON THE COUNTY PAYROLL THAT COULD HANDLE IT. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID MAYBE SOMEONE FROM THE REC DEPARTMENT COULD HANDLE IT. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THE PERSON NEEDED TO BE THERE THE ENTIRE TIME AND MR. MALPHRUS SAID THEY NEEDED TO BE THERE TO OPEN AND CLOSE AND TO MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS CLEANED UP. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SUGGESTED THAT MS. HONEY JOHNSON BE ASSIGNED TO DO THAT SINCE SHE IS VERY FAMILIAR WITH THE MARKET. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THE REC DEPARTMENT DOES THE CLEAN UP AND THE TOWN OF RIDGELAND HANDLES THE OUTSIDE MAINTENANCE.

MR. FULGHUM SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO GO OVER THE APPROPRIATIONS. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE \$13,000.00 TRAVEL AND TRAINING LINE IN DEPT. 51 CUT. CHAIRMAN HOOD COMMENTED ON THE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS TRAVELING OUT OF STATE. MR. FULGHUM SAID HE WOULD KEEP HIS TRAVEL TO A MINIMUM, BUT SOME TRAVEL IS DONE DUE TO THE PROJECTS THAT ARE BEING WORKED ON. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THAT THEY HAVE NOT ABUSED TRAVELING OUT OF STATE. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE HAD NO PROBLEM

WITH OUT OF STATE TRAVEL AS LONG AS SOMEONE ELSE IS PAYING FOR IT, NOT THE COUNTY.

MR. FULGHUM REVIEWED THE APPROPRIATIONS. MR. MALPHRUS ADDED THAT THINGS WERE PRETTY WELL SETTLED EXCEPT FOR THE FOUR LISTED ON THE HANDOUT.

IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE COUNCIL TO FUND THE COUNCIL ON AGING \$100,000.00.

IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE COUNCIL TO FUND THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB \$7,500.00.

IT WAS THE CONCENSUS OF THE COUNCIL TO GIVE THE RIDGELAND LITTLE LEAGUE FOOTBALL \$1,000.00.

IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE COUNCIL TO GIVE HARDEEVILLE RECREATION \$1,000.00.

IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE COUNCIL TO PAY THE NATIONAL GUARD \$9,000.00.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED MR. MALPHRUS TO CHECK ON HOW MANY MORE PAYMENTS WERE DUE THE NATIONAL GUARD.

COUNCILMAN GREGORY ASKED ABOUT THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT AND CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID TO KEEP IT THE WAY IT WAS.

MR. FULGHUM ASKED ABOUT THE CAPITALIZATION ISSUE, MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT \$200,000.00 WAS BUILT INTO THE BUDGET AND HE RECOMMENDED LEAVING IT IN THE BUDGET. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE DID NOT HAVE A PROBLEM WITH IT.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE MOTIONED AND CHAIRMAN HOOD SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE PUTTING \$250,000.00 OF THE PROCEEDS FROM REMOVING THE TIMBER AT SGT. JASPER PARK INTO THE BUDGET TO REDUCE THE CASH CARRY FORWARD. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH CHAIRMAN HOOD AND COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE VOTING FOR. COUNCILMAN GREGORY VOTED AGAINST.

MR. FULGHUM DISCUSSED A STIMULUS MONEY FUNDED GRANT AND SAID THAT WHEN THEY APPLIED THEY REQUESTED INPUT FROM THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT AND THE DETENTION CENTER. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT DID NOT PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THE GRANT WAS AWARDED BASED ON THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE DETENTION CENTER. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT DEPUTY HUGHES HAS REQUESTED THAT THE GRANT BE REVISITED TO SEE IF SOME CHANGES COULD BE MADE. COUNCILMAN GREGORY ASKED WHY THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT DID NOT REPLY. MR. FULGHUM SAID MS. HERMAN MADE THE REQUEST, BUT THEY NEVER SENT HER ANY INFORMATION. COUNCILMAN ETHERDIGE SAID HE DID NOT THINK THE GRANT SHOULD BE CHANGED. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THE COUNTY WOULD HAVE TO REAPPLY IF CHANGES WERE MADE.

MR. FULGHUM SUGGESTED THAT THE COUNCIL LEAVE THE GRANT AS IT WAS AWARDED.

IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE COUNCIL TO LEAVE THE GRANT AS IT WAS AWARDED.

IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE COUNCIL TO FUND THE SOLICITOR \$74,500.00 AND TO AMEND THE APPROPRIATION LATER IN THE YEAR IF NEEDED.

**OPEN FLOOR TO THE PUBLIC:**

CHAIRMAN HOOD OPENED THE FLOOR TO THE PUBLIC.

MS. GABBARD SAID SHE HAS ASKED THE MUNICIPALITIES TO FUND THE PORTION OF HER REQUEST THAT WAS NOT FUNDED BY COUNCIL. MS. GABBARD INVITED THE COUNCIL TO A RECEPTION FOR THE SUPPORTERS OF JARM AT THE PORCH ON JUNE 27, 2009. MS. GABBARD SAID THE EVENT WAS PAID FOR BY DONATIONS, NOT THE MONEY THEY RECEIVE FROM THE COUNTY.

PASTOR YOUNG ASKED THE COUNCIL TO DO WHATEVER THEY CAN TO SAVE ANY OF THE JOBS.

CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THAT ONE PERSON AFFECTED BY THE RIF SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK AS A VOLUNTEER.

BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS, CHAIRMAN HOOD CLOSED THE FLOOR TO THE PUBLIC.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

COUNCILMAN GREGORY MOTIONED AND COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SECONDED THE MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS EMPLOYMENT AND CONTRACTUAL MATTERS. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING IN FAVOR.

**RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION:**

COUNCILMAN GREGORY MOTIONED AND COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SECONDED THE MOTION TO RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING IN FAVOR.

CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THAT THE COUNCIL WAS UPDATED ON TWO CONTRACTUAL MATTERS AND EMPLOYMENT MATTERS AND THERE WAS NO NEED FOR A MOTION; CHAIRMAN HOOD TOLD THE ADMINISTRATOR TO CONTINUE TO WORK ON THE CONTRACTS.

**ADJOURN:**

COUNCILMAN GREGORY MOTIONED AND COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADJOURN THE BUDGET WORKSHOP. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING IN FAVOR.

THE MEETING ENDED AT 5:15 P.M.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

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JUDITH M. FRANK, CCC  
CLERK TO COUNCIL

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DR. GEORGE M. HOOD  
CHAIRMAN