



**JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS CONFERENCE ROOM
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**358 THIRD AVE.
RIDGELAND, SC 29936
September 8, 2009
2:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

OFFICIALS PRESENT:

HENRY ETHERIDGE, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
DR. GEORGE HOOD, COMMITTEE MEMBERS

STAFF PRESENT:

ANDREW FULGHUM, ADMINISTRATOR
RONNIE MALPHRUS, DEP. ADM. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
JUDITH FRANK, CLERK TO COUNCIL

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:

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 2:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE LED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

INVOCATION:

RONNIE MALPHRUS OFFERED THE INVOCATION.

MONTHLY REPORTS:

FINANCE- MR. MALPHRUS PROVIDED THE COMMITTEE WITH COPIES OF THE BUDGET REPORTS FOR THE 2008-2009 AND THE 2009-2010 BUDGETS. MR. MALPHRUS EXPLAINED THAT A LOT OF THE REVENUE FOR THE CURRENT YEAR HAS NOT BEEN POSTED. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT COLLECTED \$74,000.00 IN JULY. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF ANY OF THE BUDGETS WERE OUT OF LINE AND MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THINGS WERE GOOD IN AUGUST FOR THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED ABOUT THE CLERK OF COURT. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE AMOUNT LISTED WAS FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR AND IT WILL BE POSTED BY THE AUDITORS TO LAST YEAR. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED WHY THE CLERK OF COURT KEEPS THE FUNDS THAT WAY AND MR. MALPHRUS RESPONDED THAT PART WAS DUE TO COMPUTER PROBLEMS AND HE WAS NOT SURE WHY SHE DID IT LIKE THAT. MR. MALPHRUS ADDED THAT ALL FINES ARE PAID.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED HOW THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE AND THE VA OFFICE REPORT. MR. MALPHRUS EXPLAINED THAT THEY REPORT MONTHLY AND GENERALLY THE POSTING RUNS ABOUT 90 DAYS BEHIND. MR. MALPHRUS SAID HE FELT EVERYTHING LOOKED GOOD THROUGH AUGUST.

LEGAL FEES- COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHERIDGE ASKED WHY \$35,625.00 WAS PAID TO THE LAW FIRM FROM COLUMBIA. MR. MALPHRUS RESPONDED THAT THE FEES WERE MOSTLY PAID FOR EMPLOYMENT ISSUES HANDLED BY CHRIS JOHNSON. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED WHO MADE THE DECISION TO CALL CHRIS JOHNSON. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT MS. LUCAS CALLS THE FIRM REGARDING SMALL ISSUES AND IF IT IS A LARGE ISSUE MS. LUCAS GETS HIS APPROVAL TO CALL. COMMITTEE MEMBER HOOD ASKED WHY THE COUNTY ATTORNEY IS NOT RESPONDING TO MS. LUCAS'S QUESTIONS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT MR. JONES ALWAYS ENCOURAGES THEM TO CALL MR. JOHNSON. COMMITTEE MEMBER HOOD SAID THAT THE ISSUES SHOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH MR. JONES FIRST AND COLUMBIA SHOULD ONLY BE CALLED FOR ITEMS HE CANNOT HANDLE. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT MR. JOHNSON IS CALLED IF A LAWSUIT IS ANTICIPATED. MR. MALPHRUS SAID A LOT OF THE EXPENSES ARE A RESULT OF LAWSUIT FILED BY MS. LEE. COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHERIDGE ASKED IF INSURANCE WOULD PAY ON THAT LAWSUIT. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THE COUNTY PAYS FOR THE ATTORNEY UNTIL THE INSURANCE RESERVE FUND TAKES OVER THE CASE. COMMITTEE MEMBER HOOD ASKED IF THEY HAVE TRIED TO SETTLE OUT OF COURT. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THEY DO TRY TO DO THAT. COMMITTEE MEMBER HOOD COMMENTED THAT IF A CASE GOES TO COURT WILL COST A LOT MORE DUE TO ATTORNEY FEES. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE EMPLOYEE SURVEY COST ABOUT \$17,000.00- \$18,000.00. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE FELT THAT THE COUNTY ATTORNEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE AT LEAST 50% OF THE EMPLOYEE MATTERS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT PRIOR TO HIRING MR. JONES, THE COUNTY WAS PAYING ABOUT \$150,000.00 IN LEGAL FEES. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED MR. MALPHRUS TO PULL ALL THE CHECKS WRITTEN TO OUTSIDE ATTORNEYS AND HE WANTED TO SEE WHY

THE COUNTY ATTORNEY CANNOT HANDLE THE ITEMS THAT ARE BEING HANDLED BY OUTSIDE ATTORNEYS.

BUILDING PERMITS – MR. MALPHRUS REPORTED THAT 50% OF WHAT THEY BUDGETED FOR BUILDING PERMITS HAVE ALREADY BEEN COLLECTED. MR. MALPHRUS TOLD THE COMMITTEE THAT ABOUT \$80,000.00 IN BUILDING PERMITS HAVE COME IN AND ONLY ABOUT \$3,800.00 FROM PLANNING FEES SINCE JULY. MR. FULGHUM STATED THAT HE HAS HAD THREE MEETINGS WITH THE FRAMPTON DEVELOPER AND THE MERCHANTS FROM POINT SOUTH AND THEY ARE INTERESTED IN DOING A COUNTY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT AND THEY WANT TO BEAUTIFY THE EXIT AT POINT SOUTH. MR. FULGHUM ADDED THAT WHEN THEY DECIDE WHAT THEY WANT TO DO, HOWELL AND LINKCOUS WILL HANDLE CREATING A SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT TO PAY FOR THE COST OF THE IMPROVEMENTS AND FOR MAINTENANCE. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE IMPROVEMENTS THAT WOULD BE DONE WOULD BE AN ENHANCEMENT FOR EVERYONE. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT SEVERAL BUSINESS MERCHANTS MET AND THEY WERE SUPPORTIVE OF LOOKING INTO IT. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THEY FELT THE AREA WAS READY FOR REDEVELOPMENT.

DETENTION CENTER FINANCES – COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED HOW THINGS WERE RUNNING AT THE DETENTION CENTER. MR. MALPHRUS INFORMED THE COMMITTEE THAT THEY WERE OVER BUDGET LAST YEAR IN THE AMOUNT OF \$269,000.00 DUE TO THE NUMBER OF INMATES AT JUST CARE. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT MR. BENJAMIN HAS DONE A GOOD JOB WITH THE SOLICITOR TO GET THE INMATES OUT OF JUST CARE AND TO GET THEM TO COURT SOONER. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THEY WERE WANTED IN ANOTHER JURISDICTION CAN THEY BE EXTRADITED. MR. MALPHRUS RESPONDED THAT IF THEY ARE CHECKED OUT AND A WARRANT IS OUT THERE FROM ANOTHER AREA THEY CAN BE EXTRADITED. MR. FULGHUM TOLD THE COMMITTEE THAT HE MEETS WITH MR. BENJAMIN ON THURSDAYS AND THAT THERE WERE STILL SOME IMPROVEMENTS THAT NEEDED TO BE DONE AND THERE WAS STILL FUNDS IN THE ONCE CENT SALES TAX ACCOUNT THAT NEEDED TO BE SPENT. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT BASED ON THE STATE INSPECTION, CERTAIN THINGS NEED TO BE DONE.

TIMBER IN HARDEEVILLE – MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT HAS BEEN PUT ON THE BACK BURNER AND NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE TO DATE. MR. MALPHRUS SAID HE WOULD MEET WITH MARK BOYLES AND PUT OUT A REQUEST FOR BIDS. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THIS NEEDED TO BE DONE BEFORE A HURRICANE DESTROYS THE TIMBER. MR. MALPHRUS TOLD THE COMMITTEE HE WOULD GET THE

PROCESS STARTED AND THAT THE LUMP SUM METHOD WOULD BE THE EASIEST WAY TO HANDLE IT.

CELL PHONE POLICY – COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED WHAT HAS BEEN DONE REGARDING THE CELL PHONE POLICY. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT ALL EMPLOYEE'S WITH COUNTY AUTHORIZED CELL PHONES ARE RECEIVING A \$35.00 ALLOWANCE. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT IF THE EMPLOYEE GOES OVER THAT AMOUNT OR IF THEY WANT A DIFFERENT TYPE OF PHONE, THE DIFFERENCE IS PAID BY THE EMPLOYEE THROUGH PAYROLL DEDUCTION. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT EVERYONE EXCEPT THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT IS ON THE \$35.00, BUT THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT HAS NOT DONE ANYTHING AS IT COMES OUT OF HIS BUDGET. COMMITTEE MEMBER HOOD ASKED IF THE COUNCIL HAD ANY AUTHORITY REGARDING THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT ABUSING THE GASOLINE. COMMITTEE MEMBER HOOD SAID HE HAS HAD MANY COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT USING COUNTY VEHICLES, GAS AND EQUIPMENT WHILE THEY ARE WORKING PRIVATE JOBS. MR. MALPHRUS COMMENTED IF THEY ARE IN A COUNTY CAR, IT IS FILLED WITH COUNTY GAS. MR. MALPHRUS PRESENTED A PHONE POLICY THAT WAS PREPARED BY ATTORNEY JONES IN MARCH, HOWEVER SINCE THE COUNCIL CHANGED THE PAYMENT OF CELL PHONES TO \$35.00 THE POLICY WOULD HAVE TO BE CHANGED. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THAT THE COUNCIL HAS NEVER PASSED A POLICY AND MR. FULGHUM SAID A VERY BASIC ORDINANCE COULD BE PASSED, MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THE PREVIOUS PROPOSED ORDINANCE WAS MADE FROM PORTIONS OF OTHER JURISDICTIONS' ORDINANCES. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED WHO WAS THE *IT* MANAGER AND MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT STEVEN MALPHRUS HAS BEEN DOING IT, BUT HE IS NOT THE *IT* MANAGER; THE COUNTY DOES NOT HAVE AN *IT* MANAGER. MR. FULGHUM SAID HE WOULD HAVE THE ATTORNEY PREPARE THE ORDINANCE AND INCORPORATE THE COUNCIL'S RECOMMENDATIONS. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE REQUESTED THAT THE \$35.00 PER PHONE BE INCLUDED IN THE ORDINANCE.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT:

COMMITTEE MEMBER HOOD SAID THAT ONLY FIRE FIGHTERS AND DETENTION CENTER OPENINGS WERE TO BE FILLED. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT AN APPROVED SLOT FOR A DISPATCHER AND ONE PERSON IN THE CLERK OF COURT'S OFFICE WAS OPEN. MR. MALPHRUS COMMENTED THAT THERE HAS NOT BEEN A LOT OF TURNOVER SINCE JULY.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED MR. FULGHUM TO CHECK IF ALL THE WORKERS ON THE COURTHOUSE WERE LEGAL AS MANY JASPER COUNTY SUBS ARE NO LONGER WORKING ON THAT JOB.

MR. FULGHUM SAID IT WAS UP TO THE CONTRACTOR TO VERIFY THE STATUS OF HIS EMPLOYEES AND IF IT WAS IMPORTANT TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE, HE WOULD CHECK INTO IT. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE FELT THE CONTRACTS SHOULD INCLUDE THAT A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF COUNTY CITIZENS BE USED.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED ABOUT THE NUMBER OF DETENTION CENTER INMATES ON WORKER'S COMP. MR. MALPHRUS SAID HE WOULD GET THE INFORMATION FOR THE COMMITTEE.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED ABOUT THE INJURED EMPLOYEE FROM THE CHERRY POINT STATION. MR. MALPHRUS RESPONDED THAT THEY WORK WITH THE FIREMEN AND MR. FULGHUM ADDED THAT WORKERS' COMP. GOES WITH THE EMPLOYER. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE WANTED TO KNOW WHERE AND HOW THESE INDIVIDUALS WERE INJURED.

MR. MALPHRUS REPORTED THAT THERE WERE NO GRIEVANCE HEARINGS SINCE THE LAST ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING.

ASSESSOR'S DEPARTMENT:

MR. MALPHRUS REPORTED THAT THERE WERE 95 TAX APPEALS RESULTING IN A REDUCTION OF \$1,376,000.00 WHICH EQUATES TO ABOUT AN \$18,000.00 DECREASE IN TAX REVENUE TO THE COUNTY.

DELINQUENT TAXES:

MR. MALPHRUS INFORMED THE COMMITTEE THAT THE POSTING OF PROPERTY WITH DELINQUENT TAXES HAS STARTED AND THIS YEAR 1,513 PROPERTIES ARE SCHEDULED TO BE POSTED. MR. MALPHRUS ADDED THAT 105 PROPERTIES SOLD AT LAST YEAR'S DELINQUENT SALE STILL NEEDED TO BE REDEEMED. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED WHY MOBILE HOMES THAT OWE TAXES ARE NOT BEING SOLD. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE COUNTY HAS NEVER SOLD THE MOBILE HOMES, HOWEVER, MS. MOUZON IS CHECKING INTO IT. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT SOMETIMES THE PROPERTY OWNER AND THE MOBILE HOME OWNER ARE DIFFERENT. MR. FULGHUM COMMENTED THAT SOME MOBILE HOME OWNERS HAVE NOT PAID TAXES IN OVER 10 YEARS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THEY ARE CURRENTLY WORKING ON THIS SITUATION AND THEY DO GET SOME TAXES ON THE MOBILE HOMES THROUGH THE SET-OFF DEBT PROGRAM WHERE TAX REFUNDS ARE ATTACHED.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED VARIOUS LOCATIONS FOR THE TAX SALE TO BE HELD.

RECORDER OF DEEDS DEPARTMENT:

MR. MALPHRUS REPORTED THAT FROM APRIL, 2009 TO AUGUST, 2009 THERE WERE OVER 2,000 DOCUMENTS HANDLED AND 387 DEEDS WERE FILED.

DISBURSEMENTS:

MR. MALPHRUS TOLD THE COMMITTEE THAT ON AVERAGE ABOUT \$1,000,000.00 IS PAID OUT EACH MONTH.

PERRY HOUSE LEASE STATUS:

MR. FULGHUM REPORTED THAT HE HAS NOT HEARD BACK FROM THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SINCE HE SENT THEM THE REVISED LEASE. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE WOULD LIKE A COPY OF THE LEASE AND MR. FULGHUM SAID HE WOULD GIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE A COPY OF THE LEASE AFTER THE MEETING. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THE CHAMBER NEEDS TO BE PLANNING THINGS FOR THE FARMERS' MARKET THAT WILL BRING PEOPLE IN OVERNIGHT. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THE CHAMBER PROVIDES THE COUNCIL WITH A BREAKDOWN OF HOW THEY SPEND THE FUNDS THEY RECEIVE FROM THE COUNTY. MR. MALPHRUS RESPONDED THAT THEY DO NOT GET A REPORT FROM THE CHAMBER.

OLD SENIOR CENTER IN HARDEEVILLE:

MR. FULGHUM STATED THAT A CBDG GRANT WAS APPLIED FOR THE OLD SENIOR CENTER IN HARDEEVILLE, BUT IT WAS DENIED. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE BUILDING IS CURRENTLY BEING USED BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ON THE WEEKENDS AND THE SENIORS ARE STILL CLEARING IT OUT. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF MR. FULGHUM CHECKED WITH HARDEEVILLE TO SEE IF THEY WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING IT. MR. FULGHUM RESPONDED THAT HE HAS NOT, BUT THAT HARDEEVILLE WOULD LIKE FOR THE COUNTY TO USE PART OF THE OLD HARGRAY BUILDING FOR A SATELLITE OFFICE.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 3:40 P.M.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

JUDITH M. FRANK, CCC

HENRY ETHERIDGE

CLERK TO COUNCIL

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN