



MINUTES
LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2018 – 4:00 P.M.
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE – PUBLIC SQUARE

ATTENDANCE: **COUNTY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT-** County Council Committee Chair Diane Anderson, Joe Wood, Keith Tollison, Stewart Jones, Garrett McDaniel, Ted Nash and David Pitts.

COUNTY STAFF: Laurens County Administrator, Jon Caime; Laurens County Clerk to Council Betty Walsh and Laurens County Attorney, Sandy Cruickshanks.

DEPARTMENT HEADS PRESENT: Matt Pennington, EMS Director; Joey Avery, E-911/Communications Director; Billy Wilson, Vehicle Maintenance / Procurement Officer and Greg Lindley, Fire Services Director.

PRESS: None present.

SCHEDULED MEETING AGENDA ITEMS –AUGUST 14, 2018 – 1.) Call to Order; 2.) Update – Staff review of their findings (Departmental moves / locations), Jon Caime, Administrator; 3.) Discussion, Laurens County EMS Project; 4.) Recommendations from the “Committee as a Whole” to be presented to Laurens County Council (if applicable); 5.)Adjournment

MEETING NOTIFICATION – The requesting general public and Press were informed of the meeting in a timely manner. Postings of the Agenda were posted in County facilities on their bulletin boards and also posted on the County Web Site.

CALL TO ORDER – Committee Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M. and provided the invocation.

OVERVIEW OF THE MEETING – Committee Chair Diane Anderson stated that this meeting was for a review and discussion by the County Council Committee involving the ongoing departmental moves of E-911 / Communications, Laurens County Emergency Medical Services, Coroner, Sheriff’s Department and the Laurens County Rural Fire Service.

Administrator Caime noted the following comments: the capital plan implemented about eight (8) months and one of the things identified was building improvements along with HVAC upgrades. We still have about a half a million of HVAC work that needs to be done. The Law Enforcement center is showing its age with issues of space. The Old Jail has no use anymore. The existing Courthouse was discussed. The Magistrate Office moves are well on their way. The Solicitors Office and the Probation and Parole Office are needing more space and we are putting the final pieces of that together. The Probation, Pardon and Parole will be moving out of Hillcrest to Church Street. Opening up that space will allow for the Solicitor and Public Defender to expand. Council also has listed the County EMS Headquarters as high priority being overcrowded, out dated and has millions of dollars of equipment sitting out in the weather. The E-911 Center is in a danger zone prone to flooding. What has been brought to Council is an even more extensive vision for emergency services – E-911/Communications, Fire and EMS Administration Offices.

Mr. Billy Wilson said, “On the backside of this and looking at different things, I received a boiler report this morning for the Law Enforcement Center and that it is leaking carbon monoxide. The costs to repair this before winter is right at four thousand dollars (\$4,000). I believe it to be in the best interest for the County to put the County Departments for Law Enforcement, E-911 / Communications, Laurens County Emergency Medical Services, Coroner and the Laurens County Rural Fire Service all under one (1) roof. The old jail needs to be condemned and bull dozed”.

Councilman Tollison asked if there were yearly inspections held on the boiler? Mr. Wilson replied, "Yes and that repairs would consist of rebuilding, recoating and new linings. The entire HVAC system at the Law Enforcement Center is so outdated."

Bringing all back in line, Committee Chairwoman Anderson stated that the County Council Committee was directed to look into EMS locations and plans.

Mr. Pennington, Director of Laurens County EMS, said, "I was not prepared to signally address Council but do say that the County EMS should be a high priority. The Headquarters on Exchange Drive leaks, there are air conditioning issues parking is a problem, office space is needed. The supply room needs to be larger and secured due to the controlled substances we have to house. My main office area is located on South Harper and I feel a true disconnection with the EMS employees. We desperately need to have all of our operations under one roof".

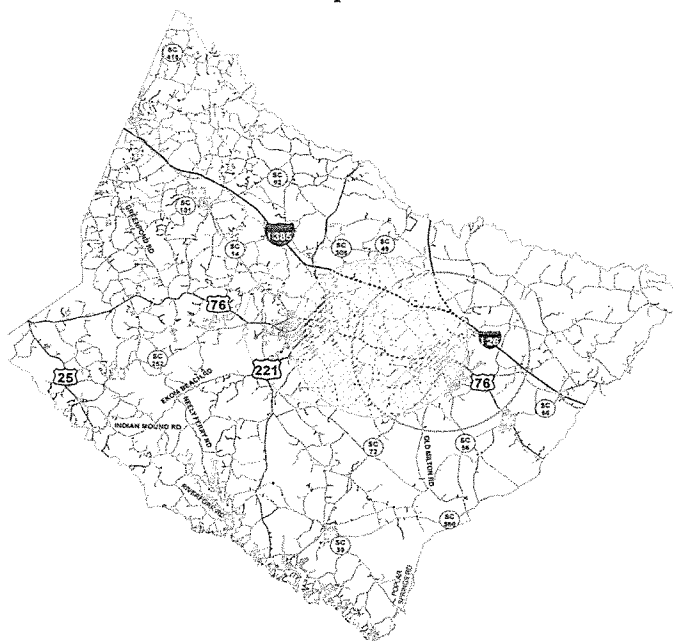
Committee Chairwoman Anderson asked what were the present thoughts of all towards the proposed properties? Mr. Pennington replied, "All that have been noted are ideal but they both have a lot of pros and cons. The Winn Dixie space is certainly adequate for our needs. The option of building on county owned property near the hospital proves to not be the best route to go. As this location would reduce the response time for one area and increase another for that specific area".

Councilman Wood stated that he felt the county owned property behind the hospital was great as to property costs but did delay response time on the secondary roads. Councilman Tollison added that the railroad in that area would be another handicap to overcome.

Mr. Avery, Director of Communications and E-911 provided a coverage map of locations – existing and proposed - within a five-mile radius.

Existing





Councilwoman Anderson said that she agreed to prioritizing the needs of the Emergency Services Departments.

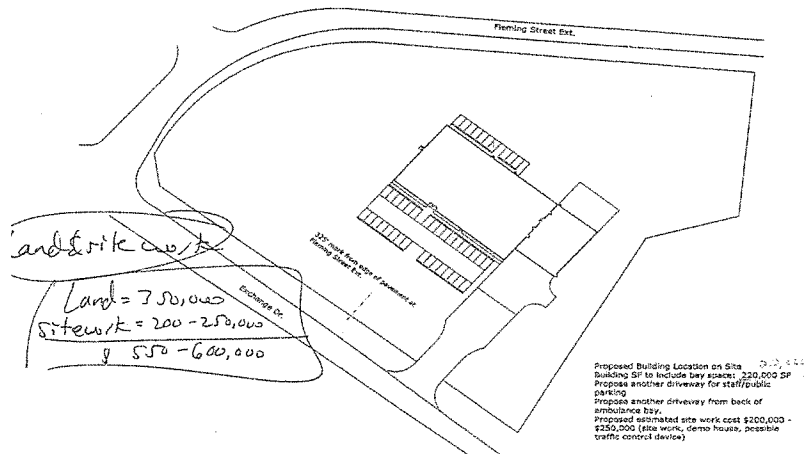
Attorney Cruickshanks stated that an option to purchase will secure the land or even the Winn Dixie building.

Councilman Wood said, “Early on the Winn Dixie building sounded good. But, there are twenty foot ceiling that will have to be lowered, the floors will have to be jackhammered to work the utilities properly. We do not really know the true condition of the building’s roof, HAVAC and other mechanical structures. I feel certain we will be in the same boat as we are now with the Hillcrest building. With the land, we can build new, what we need from the start. There is no use in throwing good money at the bad. I am totally against the Winn Dixie Building”.

Mr. Avery said, “Council is on the right track to build to house the Fire, EMS, Coroner and E-911/Communications. And, put the Law Enforcement Center at the Detention Center. EMS is the main issue at the moment. With E-911 and the others, it is a good opportunity to do so now and it makes good sense. E-911 needs more storage space. We have plenty of hallways but no storage space. Council also needs to take into consideration, the future growth of the departments. Its all down to location, having a plan and financing it. This needs to be a property that the County would be proud of that includes efficiency and functionality. Built to standards concerning the handicapped to concrete walls and climate controlled environments for the servers”.

Councilman Wood asked what the present locations had as to square footage. Exact numbers were not available at the meeting but can be obtained for future meetings.

Councilman Jones questioned the noted square footage on the proposed sketch for a new building, asking if that was an error. Mr. Garrett said that it was in error and should be twenty two thousand (22,000) square feet instead of two hundred twenty two thousand (220,000) square feet. Councilman Pitts noted that the Clinton High School was in the shape of an X and was right at two hundred thirty seven thousand (237,000) square feet.



Mr. Greg Lindley, Fire Service Director, said, “I stand to back up Matt and Joey on the needs with EMS having sole priority. The actual condition of the South Harper building is terrible. All Fire needs is just a couple of offices and storage space”.

COUNCILMAN TOLLISON made the MOTION to remove the Law Enforcement Center from the project discussions and to include only the Coroner, E-911/Communications, Fire and EMS. COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDING; VOTE 5-0-1 (Councilwoman Anderson abstained).

COUNCILMAN PITTS made the MOTION for the County Attorney and the County Administrator to provide an option to purchase towards the properties – Winn Dixie and Duncan property – securing a set amount and to move forward from that point. COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL SECONDING; VOTE 4-2-1 (Council Members Wood and Nash were in opposition and Councilwoman Anderson abstained).

Attorney Cruickshanks stated that a request for proposal would be required. Councilman Pitts stated that legally a request for proposal is not required for this.

COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL made the MOTION to allow the County Administrator to secure preliminary work on both properties given these options; COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING.

AMENDING the MOTION, COUNCILMAN PITTS added, to allow for a Request for Proposal from a professional and to not exceed an amount of twenty five thousand dollars (\$25,000). COUNCILMEN MCDANIEL AND JONES agreed to the AMENDMENT

All were in agreement with the amending motion, COUNCIL VOTED 4-3 (Council Members Nash, Tollison and Wood were in opposition).

Councilman Tollison stated, "This Council needs to take time to conduct a planning session with the department heads in order to come to a conclusion as to what size of building is needed. This should be the next step with the Council Committee as a Whole".

Councilman Pitts inserted that Council Members need to visit the present facility to see what shape they are in and to evaluate their needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE "COMMITTEE AS A WHOLE" TO BE PRESENTED TO LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL (IF APPLICABLE) – In summary, the Council actions to be conducted included the following:

- 1.) A motion was made to remove the Law Enforcement Center from the project discussions;
- 2.) To only include the Coroner, E-911/Communications, Fire and EMS;
- 3.) To allow Council to visit each department to help see their needs;
- 4.) To hold another meeting of the Council Committee as a Whole;
- 5.) To have a professional evaluate and to not exceed twenty five thousand dollars (\$25,000);
- 6.) To allow the County Attorney and County Administrator to produce an option to purchase document;
- 7.) To secure present square footage of the existing County buildings;
- 8.) To prioritize the needs for all department involved.

ADJOURNMENT – With no further action required by the Council Committee, Chairwoman Anderson adjourned the meeting at 5:25 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,


Betty C. Walsh, Clerk to Council