



**MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 25, 2018
LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE – COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

ATTENDANCE: **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT** - County Council Chairman Joe Wood and; County Council Members: Stewart Jones, Garrett McDaniel, Ted Nash and David Pitts.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT- Vice Chairman Keith Tollison.

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

STAFF ABSENT: None.

DEPARTMENT HEADS PRESENT: Debi Parker, Human Resources Manager; Greg Lindley, Director of Fire Services; Andy Howard, Director, Parks, Recreation and Tourism; Lynn West, Director of Registration and Elections; Joey Avery, Director of E911 and Communications; Jim Coleman, County Auditor; Don Reynolds, Laurens County Sheriff; Lisa Kirk, Director of Finance; Lesa Inabinette, Magistrate Judge; Billy Wilson, Superintendent of Vehicle Maintenance / Procurement and Chuck Bobo, Codes Official.

PRESS: Vic MacDonald, *The Clinton Chronicle*; Iva Cadmus, WLBG Radio and John Clayton, *The Laurens County Advertiser*.

SCHEDULED AGENDA ITEMS –SEPTEMBER 25, 2018 – 1.) Call to Order; 2.) Invocation – Councilman Jones; 3.) Pledge of Allegiance; 4.) Approval of Agenda – September 25, 2018; 5.) Approval of Minutes – a.) September 11, 2018 Council Committee Health Welfare and Public Safety; b.) September 11, 2018 Regular Session of Council; 6.) Reports to Council; 6.) Henry Laurens Award Presentation – Robert Elisha Shortt; 7.) Reports To Council: a.) Credit Card Audit; b.) Proposed Dog Park at County Park; c.) Appointment - Committee on Health, Welfare and Public Safety; 8.) Old Business: None; 9.) New Business: a.) First Reading Ordinance # 853, Amending Ordinance #830, Section 3.3 Detitling Mobile Homes; b.) Nomination approval - Laurens County Water / Sewer Commission; c.) Grant Approval - Fire Assistance to Fires Grant (AFG); 10.) Public Comment; 11.) County Council Comments; 12.) Executive Session, Employment Matter, Public Works Director; 13.) Adjournment.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN UPS – Laurens County Museum Representatives, Mrs. Carolyn Shortt and Debi Vaughn.

CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Wood called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. Councilman Jones provided the invocation and all were invited to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA –SEPTEMBER 25, 2018 – Chairman Wood asked for approval of the agenda and any additions or deletions from the agenda. Administrator Caime asked to add the County Council Committee on Health, Welfare and Public Safety under reports to Council. COUNCILMAN NASH made the MOTION to approve the September 25, 2018 agenda with the addition and COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING; VOTE 6-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- **SEPTEMBER 11, 2018 COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, WELFARE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** - COUNCILMAN PITTS made the MOTION to approve with COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL SECONDING; VOTE 6-0.
- **SEPTEMBER 11, 2018 – REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL** – COUNCILMAN JONES made the MOTION to approve with COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDING; VOTE 6-0

HENRY LAURENS AWARD PRESENTATION – ROBERT ELISHA SHORTT – Chairman Wood presented Mr. Shortt with the Henry Laurens Award and a signed resolution by Council.

Mr. Shortt thanked Council for honoring him with this extreme honor.

REPORTS TO COUNCIL:

- a.) **CREDIT CARD AUDIT** – Administrator Caime thanked those that submitted the FOI request towards credit card use and getting involved. Continuing, Administrator Caime said, “One thing that concerns us is that with posting these online, many things can become taken out of context and does not tell the whole story behind the transaction. The volume of work completed here was very extensive and time consuming by many individuals. There were twenty one thousand (21,000) total transactions, one thousand eight hundred (1,800) sheets and forty thousand (40,000) documents. I personally did not have the time to look through each and every transaction but I did look at and evaluate some of the most questionable ones. The top five (5) with the most usage was the Detention Center, EMS, Roads and Bridges, Buildings and Grounds and the Sheriff. With each transaction there should be accompanying details about the transaction. I clearly saw where more description was needed. There were several departments that had many small multiple transactions (ie. plumbing purchases, screws and nails. Filling out the data base for these would be very time consuming for every transaction. I have recommended that for multiple transactions like this, that an accompanying description be attached. Also, placing the credit card transaction online creating more transparency and each card user would be aware that each transaction would be placed on line. Here is where purchases would be taken out of context due to the descriptions used on the card invoice. A prime example would be the purchases made at Hobby Lobby. This was for purchases of orange card stock that is used in building codes for posting notices in front of the property to be able to tell that construction is going on at this location. I understand that the supply was depleted within the County at the time. Another was for Tractor Supply and Dollar General. This was for an emaciated cow that was actually transported in the front passenger seat of a Humane Officers truck – cleaning supplies and food”.

Mrs. Autumn Taylor, Clerk, Public Works Department, approached Council saying, “I am Autumn Taylor and am presently a Clerk in the Public Works Department. I have a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration from Lander University. Out of this audit, there was approximately eighty nine percent (89%) of the questionable charges having creditable documentation towards the purchases and eleven percent (11%) did not. From this, I created a database. This resulted in several questionable purchases. An example is the card purchase by Chairman Wood when he does not even have a card. This should have been applied towards Haley Spencer Wood in the Treasurers Office. Of the two hundred seventy nine (279) questionable charges, forty three (43) of those had similar mistakes. I recommend that all of the documentation be turned in with the statement in the future. Missing statements was another issue that we have. Of the one hundred sixty five (165) statements that were pulled towards questionable charges, eighteen (18) were not found but descriptions on the Bank of America web

site, descriptions were noted. There was one hundred forty four (144) travel charges. Twenty one (21) of those did not have accompanying details attached”.

Continuing Mrs. Taylor listed several means of improvements – holding employees accountable for statements, all travel charges should have proof of travel and an agenda; employee training for the card as well as signing a policy, those that sign off on the card purchases should be held responsible for documentation of the purchases and employees encouraged to retain a copy of the statement and charges”.

Administrator Caime said, “We conclude with no outright evidence of fraud. Just sloppy accountability. The net results are positive. As we all know things at Hilton Head are expensive and this is where Council attends the South Carolina Association of Counties yearly conference. No alcohol was or will be covered in the travel policy. Laurens County does have policy and procedures and I recommend updating to clarify certain areas”.

Chairman Wood assigned the County Council Committee on Planning and Intergovernmental Affairs – Diane Anderson, David Pitts and Stewart Jones.

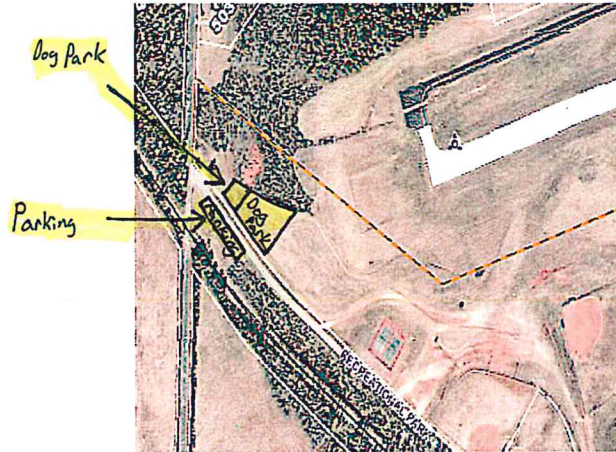
Councilman Jones thanked all involved towards coming to a conclusion of the Freedom of Information request. Councilman Jones asked if the orange card stock was efficient use of county tax money when going to different places to retrieve. Administrator Caime noted that the employee that purchased this, did the purchasing on his own time.

Councilman Jones stated that that was another question, why not buy it from a local vendor or buy online.... “It needs to be done a lot more efficiently. Ultimately the taxpayers are the watchdogs of how their tax money is spent. By putting this online they do become the watchdogs. Some of the expenses that stand out to me that are improper are the charges for night clubs at Myrtle Beach, Medieval times and airfare. There is questions with hotels and travel. There is excessive travel by some of our offices and reimbursement”.

COUNCILMAN JONES made a MOTION to have the check registry, credit card statements posted immediately on the website. The MOTION DIED due to the lack of a second. Chairman Wood stated that that was another thing that he expected the County Council Committee to come back to Council with recommendations.

- b.) **PROPOSED DOG PARK AT COUNTY PARK** – Andy Howard, Director of Parks, Recreation and Tourism approached Council identifying a proposed Dog Park to be located at the Laurens County Park on Calvin Bridges Road.

Mr. Howard said, “This project is proposed to be located at the entrance of the Park and will have ample parking (noted by the insert). This will not cost the County anything as a donation of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) will be made by a local family in honor of the memory of a family member. The details of the donation will need to be legally worked out. I am asking for Council approval to move forward with this project at the County Park”.



COUNCILMAN PITTS made the MOTION to approve the Park project with COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL SECONDING; VOTE 6-0.

- c.) **COUNTY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, WELFARE AND PUBLIC SAFETY - RE-APPOINTMENT TO THE LAURENS COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL** – Committee Chairman Pitts informed the full Council that the Committee had met before the Council meeting and is recommending the re-appointment of Mr. John Jay Peay for another four years on the Hospital Board. As a MOTION and a SECOND from the Committee, COUNCIL VOTED 6-0 to approve.
- f.) **ADDED AGENDA ITEM – COUNTY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS – ESTABLISHMENT OF A COUNTY IT AND PLANNING JOB DESCRIPTIONS** – Committee Chairwoman Anderson informed Council that the Committee had met prior to this regular session of Council to discuss job descriptions for the proposed positions within the IT Department and Planning Departments.

Continuing Committee Chairwoman Anderson stated that there was a Council Committee consensus to only discuss the management positions for these two departments and that the managers should be the ones to hire and set the job descriptions.

IT MANAGER - There was one (1) addition to the IT Manager job description that served as a MOTION and a SECOND from the COMMITTEE as follows:

IT Manager Job Description – Page 5:

- Stated in draft - “Minimum Education and Experience Requirements: Bachelor’s Degree preferred. Alternate education requirements; five to seven years of experience of working with or in tandem with IT management staff or a degree in Information Systems Technology”
- Requested to add to this requirement - “Minimum Education and Experience Requirements: Bachelor’s Degree preferred. Alternate education requirements; five to seven years of **Government IT / Networking** experience of working with or in tandem with IT management staff or a degree in Information Systems Technology”

PLANNING DEPARTMENT: No changes were recommended from the Committee and the Committee they recommended approval of the Planning Manager job description as presented.

As a MOTION and a SECOND from the Committee, COUNCIL VOTED 5-1 (Councilman Jones was in opposition). Councilman Jones' opposition was stated as he did not want to add government at the time.

Councilwoman Anderson noted that this was for the job descriptions for managers and that the money was already there as approved by Council during budget deliberations.

OLD BUSINESS - NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

- a.) **FIRST READING ORDINANCE # 853, AMENDING ORDINANCE #830, SECTION 3.3 DETITLING MOBILE HOMES –** COUNCILMAN JONES made the MOTION with COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDING; VOTE 6-0.
- b.) **NOMINATION APPROVAL - LAURENS COUNTY WATER / SEWER COMMISSION –** COUNCILMAN NASH asked for Council nomination approval of Mr. Sam Peden of Fountain Inn to the Water/Sewer Commission. COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING; VOTE 6-0.

Administrator Caime noted that this appointment would require Mr. Peden to resign from the County Planning Commission.

- c.) **GRANT APPROVAL - ASSISTANCE TO FIRES GRANT (AFG) –** Director Gregg Lindley approached Council informing them of two (2) approved Assistance to Fire Grants (AFG) that have been awarded to the Sandy Springs and Western Laurens Volunteer Fire Departments. A five percent (5%) match is required by the County at a total of six thousand one hundred ninety dollars (\$6,190.00). The funds would come from the current Fire Reserve Fund.

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|---|---|
| Sandy Springs Volunteer Fire Department | Western Laurens Volunteer Fire Department |
| \$70,000 AFG - \$3,333.00 5% match | \$60,000 AFG - \$2,857.00 5% match |
| Cascade Unit, Gear Washer/Extractor/Dryer | Fixed and Mobile Cascade Unit |

COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve the grant match monies with COUNCILMAN PITTS SECONDING; VOTE 6-0.

Councilman Jones asked Mr. Lindley what was the current amount of monies in his account. Mr. Lindley replied approximately six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- 1.) Representing the Laurens County Museum were Mrs. Debi Vaughn and Mrs. Carolyn Shortt. They approached Council informing of several upcoming events and invited all to attend. But, mostly they addressed Council with their appreciation for the funding provided during budget discussions.

COUNTY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

- 1.) Councilman Jones asked when the Council Committee would be meeting. It was discussed and noted that Mrs. Walsh would secure the best date and time with the Council Members from the committee.
- 2.) Councilman Nash stated that a lot can be accomplished when all work together.
- 3.) Councilman McDaniel expressed his appreciation towards the citizens and the staff.

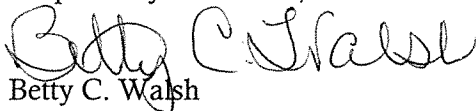
EXECUTIVE SESSION – Upon a MOTION by COUNCILMAN PITTS and a SECOND from COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL; VOTE 6-0, Council moved into Executive Session at 6:47 P.M. to discuss an employment matter regarding the Public Works Director open position.

There was a COUNCIL CONSENSUS to reconvene in open session at 7:05 P.M.

Chairman Wood reported that no action was taken on the employment matter, Public Works Director.

ADJOURNMENT – By CONSENSUS the meeting was adjourned at 7:08 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Betty C. Walsh".

Betty C. Walsh

Laurens County Clerk to Council