



Special Called Finance, Administration, and Economic Development Committee Meeting Beaufort County, SC

This meeting was held both in person at the County Council Chambers, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, and virtually through Zoom.

Monday, August 28, 2023
1:30 PM

MINUTES

Watch the video stream available on the County's website to hear the Council's discussion of a specific topic or the complete meeting. <https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/270320>

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chairman Lawson called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

PRESENT

Chairman Mark Lawson
Vice-Chairman Anna Maria Tabernik
Council Member David P. Bartholomew
Council Member Gerald Dawson
Council Member York Glover
Ex-Officio Joseph F. Passiment
Council Member Logan Cunningham (arrived late)
Council Member Paula Brown
Council Member Alice Howard
Council Member Thomas Reitz

ABSENT

Council Member Lawrence McElynn

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee Chairman Lawson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. FOIA

Committee Chairman Lawson noted that public notification of this meeting had been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to Amend: It was moved by Committee Vice-Chair Tabernik, seconded by Council Member Bartholomew, to remove the executive session to talk about the items in open session and to add two motions, one to select a law firm and one to appropriate money.

The Vote - The motion to amend was approved without objection.

Main Motion: It was moved by Committee Vice-Chair Tabernik, seconded by Council Member Bartholomew, to approve the agenda, as amended.

The Vote - The motion was approved without objection.

5. CITIZEN COMMENT PERIOD

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the full comment.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/270320?ts=138>

1. Skip Hoagland

6. PURSUANT TO S.C. CODE SECTION 30-4-70(A)(2) TO ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS OF PROPOSED CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS (POSSIBLE SELECTION OF OUTSIDE LAW FIRM TO CONDUCT REVIEWS AND AUDITS AS PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED BY COUNCIL)

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the full discussion.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/270320?ts=415>

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Bartholomew, seconded by Council Member Brown, to recommend hiring Law Firm B to perform the reviews, audit, and other work that County Council authorized the Finance Committee to oversee during its meeting of July 24, 2023, as well as any other additional work the Finance Committee authorizes the firm to perform and that we forward this decision to the County Council for ratification during tonight's special called meeting.

Discussion: Committee Vice-Chair Tabernik and Council Member Brown commented that both firms would hire outside CPAs to conduct forensic audits.

Council Member Howard noted that both firms pledged to provide timely updates on their findings.

Council Members Dawson and Reitz voiced their support for Firm B.

Council Member Bartholomew commented that Firm B is the best option given their ability to conduct a lot of the work in-house and voiced his support for an outside forensic audit of the County's accounts.

Council Member Passiment added that Firm B has no ties to the County.

Committee Chairman Lawson echoed the support for Firm B and highlighted the benefits associated with their fee structure and planned milestones. Committee Chairman Lawson also commented that the name of the chosen firm would be released once the item is voted on during the August 28, 2023, Special Called County Council meeting at 3:30 PM.

The Vote - The motion was approved without objection.

Motion: It was moved by Committee Vice-Chair Tabernik, seconded by Council Member Howard, to recommend approval of the adoption, by title only, an ordinance to amend the FY24 Budget Ordinance (Ordinance 2023/22) to appropriate \$350,000 to County Council's budget to cover any anticipated costs of performing the reviews and audit we authorized on July 24, 2023, and any additional work the Finance Committee authorizes the law firm to perform.

Discussion: The Committee discussed the decision to appropriate \$350,000 and that the funds would come from the general fund. Committee Chairman Lawson added that there would be a monthly billing for the chosen firm based on actual work performed.

The Vote - The motion was approved without objection.

7. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee did not enter an executive session.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned: 1:45 PM

Ratified: October 16, 2023