



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

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

Monday, May 08, 2023
2:00 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/228566>

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chairman Lawson called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

PRESENT

Chairman Mark Lawson
Vice-Chairman Anna Maria Tabernik
Council Member David P. Bartholomew
Council Member Gerald Dawson
Council Member York Glover (arrived late)
Ex-Officio Joseph F. Passiment
Council Member Logan Cunningham
Council Member Paula Brown
Council Member Alice Howard
Council Member Thomas Reitz
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: It was moved by Council Member Passiment, seconded by Committee Vice-Chair Tabernik, to approve the agenda.

The Vote - The motion was approved without objection.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Passiment, seconded by Council Member Dawson, to approve the minutes of March 20, 2023.

The Vote - The motion was approved without objection.

6. CITIZEN COMMENTS

No citizen comments.

7. RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE (BY TITLE ONLY) TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS FOR COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICTS FOR BEAUFORT COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2023 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2024; TO LEVY TAXES FOR THE PAYMENT THEREOF; TO ADOPT LAW ENFORCEMENT UNIFORM SERVICE CHARGES/ USER FEE; TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF SAID TAXES AND OTHER REVENUES COMING INTO THE COUNTY; TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF SAID LAW ENFORCEMENT UNIFORM SERVICE CHARGES/ USER FEE; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO

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<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/228566?ts=127>

CFO Hayes Williams briefed the Committee on Beaufort County's funds, including the general fund, capital improvement fund, special revenue funds, capital projects funds, debt service funds, and proprietary funds. CFO Williams also presented the proposed FY 2024 budget, including the expected revenue and expenditures, operating budget and projects for the different funds, millage rates, and funding of outside agencies.

Committee Vice-Chair Tabernik and CFO Williams discussed the publication of fund information for the public and the threshold for designating something as a capital item.

Council Member Glover and CFO Williams discussed payroll contingency.

Council Member Passiment and CFO Williams discussed funding provided to the Lowcountry Council of Governments and the appeal process for property value assessments.

The Committee and Capital Improvement Projects Director Larson discussed designing and constructing Beaufort, Battery Creek, and MC Riley pools.

Council Member Howard and County Administrator Greenway discussed the garage fund and hiring employees for vehicle maintenance work.

Council Member Glover asked about the challenges with hiring Stormwater personnel. County Administrator Greenway replied that the building boom pulled potential employees into the private sector because of better pay and that staff is working to bring forward a plan to ensure a competitive salary for Stormwater positions.

Council Member Bartholomew and CFO Williams discussed funding provided to Beaufort Memorial Hospital and the impact of millage rates.

Council Member Reitz and CFO Williams discussed the Sheriff's Office budget shortfall.

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Passiment, seconded by Council Member Dawson, to recommend approval of an ordinance (by title only) to make appropriations for county government and special purpose districts for Beaufort County for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024; to levy taxes for the payment thereof; to adopt law enforcement uniform service charges/ user fee; to provide for the expenditure of said taxes and other revenues coming into the county; to provide

for the expenditure of said law enforcement uniform service charges/ user fee; and other matters related thereto.

Discussion: Committee Chair Lawson commented on the timeline for approval.

The Committee and County Attorney Keaveny discussed potential changes to the budget and funding provided to the offices of elected officials.

The Vote – The motion was approved without objection.

8. RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION TO EXPRESS BEAUFORT COUNTY COUNCIL'S SUPPORT FOR THE SOUTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS TO VEST BUDGET AUTHORITY AND MILLAGE RATE SETTING AUTHORITY FOR THE OPERATION OF THE SCHOOLS IN BEAUFORT COUNTY WITH THE BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/228566?ts=2404>

County Administrator Greenway commented that the resolution would allow Beaufort County School District to have fiscal autonomy. Mr. Greenway also said that the Beaufort County Legislative Delegation would introduce legislation to allow the School Board to have authority over its budget as long as the Board complies with SC Act 388.

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Passiment, seconded by Council Member Howard, to recommend approval of a resolution to express Beaufort County Council's support for the South Carolina General Assembly to take the necessary steps to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws to vest budget authority and millage rate setting authority for the operation of the schools in Beaufort County with the Beaufort County Board of Education.

Discussion: Committee Vice-Chair Tabernik and Council Member Dawson commented on their support for giving the School Board the authority of financial decisions.

Beaufort County School District Superintendent Rodriguez discussed the current budget process and the challenges of hiring staff because of the inability to guarantee salaries until the County Council approves the budget.

Council Member Cunningham asked if SC Act 388 could be removed and if County Council had any say in salaries. County Administrator Greenway said the South Carolina legislature could amend legislation to remove Act 388. Mr. Greenway also noted that the County Council does not have a say in how the salaries are set now but that the School Board is elected, so they will have to answer to constituents about the budget.

Committee Chair Lawson confirmed that the Council would just be recommending action to the Legislative Delegation.

Council Member Glover asked if there would be a public hearing on the school budget.

The Vote – The motion was approved without objection.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned: 2:55 PM

Ratified: August 21, 2023