



County Council of Beaufort County

Chairman

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Vice Chairman

MARK LAWSON

Committee Members

GERALD DAWSON

STU RODMAN

PAUL SOMMERVILLE

County Administrator

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Clerk to Council

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Finance Committee Minutes

Monday, May 18, 2020 at 2:00 PM

[This meeting is being held virtually in accordance with Beaufort County Resolution 2020-05]

PRESENT

Chairman Chris Hervochon
Vice Chairman Mark Lawson
Council Member Michael Covert
Council Member Gerald Dawson
Council Member Brian Flewelling
Council Member York Glover
Council Member Joseph F. Passiment
Council Member Alice Howard
Council Member Paul Sommerville
Council Member Stu Rodman
Council Member Lawrence McElynn

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hervochon called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

FOIA COMPLIANCE

Sarah W. Brock, Clerk to Council, confirmed that public notification of the meeting was published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Flewelling, seconded by Council Member Rodman, to approve the agenda. The vote: YEAS – Council Member Passiment, Council Member Covert, Council Member Glover, Chairman Hervochon, Council Member Rodman, Council Member Howard, Council Member Dawson, Council Member Flewelling, and Vice Chairman Lawson. The motion passed 10:0.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Flewelling, seconded by Council Member Rodman, to approve the April 20, 2020 meeting minutes. The vote: YEAS – Council Member Passiment, Council Member Covert, Council Member Glover, Chairman Hervochon, Council Member Rodman, Council Member Howard, Council Member Dawson, Council Member Flewelling, and Vice Chairman Lawson. The motion passed 10:0.

PRESENTATION ITEMS

Funding Request for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 from the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority/ Palmetto Breeze in the Amount of \$357,052.00

No one from Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority/ Palmetto Breeze was in attendance to speak to this item. Chairman Hervochon referred this item to the administration for further discussion.

Council Member Rodman stated that Palmetto Breeze was shut down for a few months and questioned what happened to the funds allocated that wasn't used due to not operating. Mr. Williams, Finance Director, did not show any refunds regarding savings from COVID 19 and Council Member Hervochon suggested that be a follow-up item for staff.

Status: For Information only.

Beaufort County Sheriff's Office FY21 Budget Request- Sheriff P.J. Tanner

Discussion: Suzanne Cook presented the 20/21 budget which is \$300,000.00 less than last year and approximately \$500,000.00 to \$1 Million is being refunded back to the general fund. The total requested amount for fiscal year 21 is \$33,199,342.00 and a line item budget will be provided at a later date.

Status: For informational purposes only.

Beaufort County's Probate Court FY21 Budget Request- Judge Kenneth Fulp

Discussion: Judge Kenneth Fulp gave an update on programs and budget expectations for the fiscal year 2021 and the request being slightly less than last year.

Status: For informational purposes only.

Beaufort County Public Defender's Office FY21 Budget Request- Stephanie Smart –Gettings

Discussion: Stephanie Smart-Gettings gave an update on the caseload the Public Defender's office has and what new personnel positions they are requesting.

Current Transfer from General Fund \$899,909.00

Public Defender FY21 Request \$1,600,000.00

Requested Increase \$700,091

New Positions Requested (salaries and benefits)

1 Social Worker \$74,790

4 Attorneys (\$93,488 per attorney) \$373,952

3 Administrative Assistants (\$49,860 per admin) \$149,580

Infrastructure (new matrix) (one-time request) \$150,000

Status: For informational purposes only.

Beaufort County Coroner's Office FY21 Budget Request- Coroner Ed Allen

Discussion: Coroner Ed Allen spoke about his office's budget request stating that the fiscal year 2021 budget will be about the same as last year with an increase of \$150,000.00 due to replacing three vehicles.

Status: For informational purposes only.

Beaufort County Auditor's Office FY21 Budget Request- Auditor Jim Beckert

Discussion: Auditor Jim Beckert stated that for this fiscal year 2021 request, there isn't a need for additional staffing, but a second inspector position needs to be filled. In regards to operations, posting, and printing, Mr. Beckert mentioned that by shifting to a printing vendor for annual property returns it will provide savings and greater efficiencies to the county. Mr. Beckert also mentioned that there was an increase in subscriptions for the property valuation guides needed to generate personal property tax notices. There is also an increase in office supplies. \$1,012,000.00 is being requested.

Status: For informational purposes only.

Treasurer's Office Budget Request FY21- Treasurer Maria Walls

Discussion: Treasurer Maria Walls stated that the increase in her budget request was for printing, postage, processing fees, and new personnel totaling \$91,012.00.

Status: For information only.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Discussion Regarding the Method Used to Establish the School Tax Millage Rate as Requested by the County Auditor

Mr. Beckert stated that if there is a code of Ordinance for the millage rate it cannot be located and the Council needs to address the item further.

Council Member Passiment suggested these steps; research the Ordinance, research on who does the methodology, have a conversation with the school district regarding the methodology and then meet with Council.

The committee decided to discuss this item further at the Budget Work Session scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2020.

Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce/ Visitor and Convention Bureau 20/21 Southern Beaufort County Marketing Plan

https://issuu.com/hdmartin/docs/2020-2021_beaufort_county_marketing_plan_-_final/54

Ariana Pernice from Hilton Head Island and Bluffton Chamber of Commerce presented the 2020-2021 Southern Beaufort County marketing plan which can be found https://issuu.com/hdmartin/docs/2020-2021_beaufort_county_marketing_plan_-_final/54. This plan focuses on social media and marketing tourism.

Budget

SEO/ Social Media (Organic) \$40,000.00

SEM/ Social media Advertising \$47,550.00

Website and Campaign Maintenance \$7,500.00

Collateral/Fulfillment \$6,000.00

Research and Planning \$2,750.00

Operations and Management \$69,200.00 Total Expense: \$173,000.00

The proposed budget has taken into consideration significant reductions in ATAX funding due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and will continue to work with the Town of Bluffton to flex and scale the budget further as needed to ensure it reflects the appropriate levels of funding available for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Greater Beaufort-Port Royal CVB Request for A/H-Tax Funds

Mr. Wells, Northern Beaufort County DMO, has requested \$760,000.00 in ATAX funds to quickly re-ignite the tourism industry recovering from COVID-19.

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Rodman, seconded by Council Member Sommerville to reopen the 3% A-Tax application process to consider an amount not to exceed \$314,000.

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Rodman, seconded by Council Member Flewelling to amend the original motion to include: this is taking place during a county emergency, shorten the reopening of the application period to two weeks and consider the amount not to exceed \$314,000 or a reserved portion of the 3% A-Tax funds at the next Council. Voting Yea: Council Member Flewelling, Council Member Rodman, Vice Chairman Lawson Voting Nay: Council Member Passiment, Council Member Sommerville, Council Member Covert, Council Member Dawson, Council Member Glover, Chairman Hervochon, Council Member Howard, Council Member McElynn. Motion failed 3:8.

ACTION ITEMS

Consideration of a May River Affordable Housing Affordable Housing Impact Fee Waiver- Eric Greenway, Director of Planning and Zoning

Discussion: Eric Greenway, Director of Planning and Zoning stated that impact fees are collected at the time of permits, however in this particular case the regulatory program being used by the developer will not allow the necessary affordable housing restrictive covenants to be recorded until after construction has commenced therefore proposing that an MOU agreement be used as the basis of conditionally approving the waiver and deferring any payment of required impact fees prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy for any of the units. This will allow the necessary documents to be recorded in compliance with the regulatory program being used by the developer, to ensure that the designated unit remained in compliance with impact fee chart for affordable housing but also allows the County to maintain leverage for the collection of the fees should the necessary documents not be executed prior to requested occupancy.

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Howard, seconded by Council Member Flewelling to approve the May River Affordable Housing Impact Fee Waiver Housing Impact Fee Waiver. Voting Yea: Council Member Passiment, Council Member Sommerville, Council Member Covert, Council Member Dawson, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member Rodman, Council Member Glover, Chairman Hervochon, Council Member Howard, Vice Chairman Lawson, Council Member McElynn. Motion passed 11:0

Consideration of a Pilot Agreement Regarding Project Blueberry- John O'Toole, Executive Director of Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation.

John O'Toole, Executive Director of Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation stated that a Charleston-based firm contacted him in 2018 and is considering investing \$19.5 million into a solar project in Beaufort County. They have identified a tract of land adjacent to the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS)-Beaufort for this development. This project has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Defense with the caveat that it will be able to spot-check equipment on-site at any time for national security purposes.

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Flewelling, seconded by Council Member Dawson to approve the Pilot Agreement Regarding Project Blueberry and forward to Council. Voting Yea: Council Member Passiment, Council Member Covert, Council Member Dawson, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member Rodman, Council Member Glover, Chairman Hervochon, Council Member Howard, Vice Chairman Lawson and Council Member McElynn. Motion passed 11:0

CITIZEN COMMENT

Facebook Live

Trey Manuel, NARCAN education site, wanted to know who was funding. Monica Spells, Assistant County Administrator, Community Services responded that it is funded through a grant provided by the state.

Joe Barth, regarding ATAX funding, recommended the Drive-In Movie Theater.

Frank Lesense, questions why there isn't an account in the process of Emergency situation. What is the point of having a DMO if it cannot receive emergency funding to jumpstart the tourism economy? Why is the County collecting ATAX/HTAX if citizens can't depend on it during a Global Economic Pandemic Emergency?

Email

Pierre Edward Benold: Support the Beaufort, Port Royal, Sea island Convention, and Visitors Bureau's post COVID marketing plan.

John Marshall: As the owner of Old World Tavern and supports the Beaufort, Port Royal, Sea Island Convention, and Visitors Bureau.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm

Ratified by Committee: June 15, 2020