

MINUTES  
UNION COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2021 AT 5:30 P.M.  
MEETING ROOM AT 103 WEST MAIN STREET  
STREAMED TO FRANK HART UNION COUNTY  
SUPERVISOR FACEBOOK PAGE

Present: Chairman Frank Hart, Vice-Chairman Ben Ivey, Councilwoman Tracie Campbell, Councilman Ralph Tucker, Councilman Tommie Hill and, Acting Clerk to Council Kindra Horne and County Attorney Sammy Diamaduros.

Absent: Councilman John Flood

Notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda giving the date, time and place of the meeting was posted on the bulletin board in the hall of the Union County Courthouse and a copy was mailed or emailed to the members of the Union County Council, the County Attorney, Jeff Fellers with Clemson Extension, Mr. Mickey Gist, Mr. Robert Small, Mr. James Kollock, Mrs. Casie Jolly, Mike Stevens and Daniel Prince at WBCU Radio Station, Graham Williams at the County News, the News Room at the Spartanburg Herald Journal, Shell Suber at MHISC, and Michael Lee with MHISC as well as to elected officials and heads of various county departments and offices. A notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda were also posted on the County's website.

Chairman Frank Hart called the meeting to order. Councilman David Sinclair gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Clerk to Council gave the Roll Call with the following results:

Tracie Campbell, District 1 – Present

Ralph Tucker, District 2 – Present

David Sinclair, District 3 - Present

Ben Ivey, District 4 - Present

Tommie Hill, District 5 - Present

John Flood, District 6 – Absent

David Sinclair: Made a motion to dispense with reading of the minutes of the regular monthly meeting of the Union County Council held on August 10, 2021 and to adopt the minutes as written.

Ben Ivey: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Katherine Pendergrass presented certificates to each member of County Council from ReGenesis for their support as August 8-21 was recognized as National Health Center Week.

Chairman Frank Hart stated some of the members of the Dixie Youth World Series Team could not be present due to having to be in quarantine due to COVID so they will try to do something to recognize them in October.

Amy Austin with the Miracle League stated they would be sending several players to Texas the All-Star games and asked County Council to help with their travel expenses. She introduced some of the players

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who were present. She went over the estimated travel costs and what they had raised to help with those costs.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to match the \$2,000.00 donated by the City Council with the funds to come from the Contingency Fund.

Ben Ivey: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart presented Service Awards and gift certificates for Amy Ponder for 25 years, for Albert Roark for 5 years, and for James Jennings for 5 years of dedicated service to Union County. Chairman Frank Hart along with Sheriff Jeff Bailey presented a Service Award and gift certificate to Brad Woods for 20 years of dedicated service to Union County.

Chairman Frank Hart stated next on the agenda was Juan Adriatico to discuss sponsorship of the USA Warrior Pro Am Baseball Team but he was not present at the meeting.

John Lummus as President and CEO of Upstate SC Alliance gave Council on update. They are the marketing organization for economic development for the upstate region which includes Union County. They work very closely with all the Development Board Directors in the Upstate. For the year 2020, they had about \$400 million in new investments and 3,000 new jobs and 57 projects across the region. They revamped their website and marketing materials, started some digital campaigns, did a lot of social media work, and did Zoom events with site consultants. He listed reasons why companies would want do business in Upstate South Carolina. The year 2021 has started out great with the highest Requests for Information or RFI's in the past seven years since he has been with the Alliance. They have over \$1 billion in new investment with 5,000 jobs and a total of 28 projects. The expansion of Standard Textile in Union County was one of those projects. The manufacturing jobs and training to fill those jobs through our colleges and tech facilities has been big for the Upstate which is a great place to live and do business.

Elise Ashby asked that a referendum calling for the question of allowing alcohol sales on Sunday be put on the ballot in November. She is an advocate for alcohol sales on Sundays for the revenue it will bring and for advancement. She said Council has stated they want a full-service restaurant in the county but has not addressed Sunday alcohol sales. Chairman Frank Hart stated they could not take action on this as it was not on the agenda, it would take three readings of an ordinance and we are past the time to add it to the cycle for this November.

Chairman Frank Hart stated next on the agenda was to consider any job vacancies but there were none.

Chairman Frank Hart stated next on the agenda was to consider appointments to vacant positions on boards and commissions but there were none.

Chairman Frank Hart stated next on the agenda was to consider bids for the South State Bank renovations. We received bids from four firms and he recommended awarding the bid to the low bidder Raby Company LLC with a bid of \$789,975.00 with a ten percent contingency on this project and an approval amount of \$875,000.00 from Bond proceeds.

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to award the bid for the renovation of the South State Bank building to Raby Company LLC in the amount \$789,975.00 with a ten percent contingency on this project and approved payment of \$875,000.00 from the 2021 Bond proceeds.

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Tommie Hill: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart called for any comments from elected officials and department heads.

Finance Director Ann Boggs stated she thought we had resolved and paid all debts for fiscal year 2020-2021 and we are at about 90% of that budget being spent. For the first two months of fiscal year 2021-2022, which represents 16.7% of the fiscal year we are at 15.9% expenses which is pretty much on track for the month of August.

Sheriff Jeff Bailey stated they are close to being fully staffed which is due to the pay raises and attention given to his office which was a moral changer. He said the bad news is the problems with the drug Fentanyl and overdoses. They are working in the right direction as they have had a lot of help from outside agencies on the local and State levels as it is a national problem. There is a problem in the county with catalytic converter thieves. They have solved most of those cases and hope to get restitution for the victims. The Department of Public Safety awarded them a grant this week for body cameras and storage for the cameras in the amount of \$68,000.00. Part of that money will be used to reimburse the County.

Public Works Director Rusty Snider stated they are fully staffed right now for the first time in two years. The vehicle fuel cards expire on September 30<sup>th</sup> and the old ones need to be turned in to be replaced with the new ones.

Detention Center Director Niel McKeown stated on behalf of the Union County 911 Committee he thanked everyone for their help on the ceremony for 911 since it is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Tax Assessor Jake Black stated the aerial photography is finally on the website and online for everyone to access.

Delinquent Tax Collector Lorene Bevis stated they are trying to get the paperwork done on delinquent taxes.

Airport and Stadium Manager Ronnie Wade stated they had gotten bids to construct a building at Timken Sports Complex and the low bid came in at a cost of over \$170,000.00. Jerry Langley did the plan and inmate labor was used to construct the building. They got the permit from Tim Roseborough and everyone worked together to complete this project. He provided Council with pictures of the new building. He is working on Senior Citizens Day at the Fair which is coming up. There is a football game at the stadium Friday night. The Tractor Show is on Saturday at the fairgrounds. Morningside is interested in doing candy distribution for Halloween like they did last year at the fairgrounds and the stadium. There are some other churches that want to participate. They are planning to do a Fun Day at the airport. He talked about the FAA grants for the airport. He provided Council with a picture of the tractor mower he would like to purchase with funds received for the CARES Grant. He talked about some fencing they needed. They have a \$170,000.00 grant for parking areas at the airport which will be handled through the new engineering firm for the airport.

Eric Harold as Director of EMS gave his report on call volume and response time. The new ambulance is in and they are working on getting it operational. The 800 radios are here and they are working on

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getting all the specifics such as frequencies worked out on those. He currently has one paramedic opening and one EMT opening he hopes to have filled by October.

Community Director Kathy Jo Lancaster gave an update on where they are on the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission adopted a resolution on August 16, 2021 to recommend to County Council the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan titled Comprehensive Plan 2031: A Shared Vision For Our Tomorrow. It will require three readings of the Ordinance and a Public Hearing which has been scheduled for October 4<sup>th</sup> with a 30-day prior notification which was published in the Union County News on August 24<sup>th</sup> allowing for plenty of time for review. The proposed Comprehensive Plan is posted on the County's web site and Council was provided with printed copies. The Council will need to hold some special meetings in order to adopt the ordinance on October 12<sup>th</sup>. She went over the different events they have planned to inform the public about the Comprehensive Plan.

Tourism Director Curtiss Hunter said they are reapplying for the Parks and Recreation (PARC) Grant that they applied for last year. This weekend is the Antique Show. September 23<sup>rd</sup> through September 25<sup>th</sup> is the Livestock Show.

Dennis Merrifield as Fire Coordinator gave an update on the radio system. Two tower crews are coming in to make any necessary repairs to the towers. That will render the Jonesville site back into full operation, the Carlisle site will be lined up so the connections between the main tower and the Carlisle tower link and the Cross Keys site is being tested. Hopefully by Wednesday the issues will be fixed. They went to Motorola corporate and got some good response from them. They brought in a system technologist that reviewed and tested all facets of the system to make sure it was operating correctly. He stated technology is always evolving and changing and we need to be looking at ways to upgrade and make improvements.

Chairman Frank Hart stated next on the agenda was a resolution to set the tax levy. That will be delayed until the October meeting.

Chairman Frank Hart gave his Supervisor's Report. He thanked the members of the 911 Committee for putting together the 911 Ceremony. He said it was a great event with a great speaker with a great turnout and was well put together. The renovation of the South State Bank building for the County Government Offices Building should be completed by March of 2022 with a proposed April move-in. It will house County Administration, HR, Accounts Payable, Treasurer, Auditor, Assessor and Tax Collector. There will be a drive-thru window where taxpayers can make their payments to the Treasurer's Office. The Courthouse will handle judiciary functions. They are finalizing plans for the renovations to the Wells Fargo building for the Sheriff's Department with a planned completion date of January of 2022 with a planned move-in date of February of 2022. Jerry Brannon did a good job of coming up with the proposed roads for resurfacing. The Transportation Committee got \$950,000.00 approved in funding for resurfacing of 220 roads consisting of 64 miles for the project. The Midway Drive extension should be completed by March 22, 2022. The Midway Bridge replacement is being done by the State at no cost to the county and should be open by November or December. Lockhart Boat Ramp closes September 23<sup>rd</sup> with anticipated release of funds in October. Hope to have that project completed by May of 2022. The American Rescue Plan Act provided funds to the State and Union County received about \$90,000 from those funds. That same Act should provide \$5.3 million directly to Union County. We have received half those funds and none of those funds have been spent.

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He listed the things the funds could be used for which could help with the issue of over-crowding at the jail. There will be a Special Election on November 2<sup>nd</sup> for two referendums calling for the question on the One Cent Capital Project Sales Tax and the question on the Change of Government from Council/Supervisor to Council/Administrator. He said it is important to educate the public on what these are about.

Chairman Frank Hart called for any committee reports. He said the Committee on Public Works, Roads and Bridges and County Property had met and plans to meet again on September 27<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.

Chairman Frank Hart said Kathy Jo Lancaster let him know they would need to hold two special meetings September 27<sup>th</sup> and another on October 4<sup>th</sup> as well as a public hearing on October 4<sup>th</sup>. He said he would like to see all the Council Committees meet before the end of the year. The Fire Ordinance and the Burn Ordinance need to be discussed before we can hold final reading on those.

Chairman Frank Hart asked if there were any other committee reports but there were none.

Chairman Frank Hart called for any other business but there was none.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to go into executive session to discuss economic development, contractual and personnel matters.

Ben Ivey: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The Union County Council went into executive session to discuss economic development, contractual and personnel matters.

Chairman Frank Hart stated they were ready to close executive session and no votes were taken during executive session.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to close executive session.

Ben Ivey: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The Union County Council returned the meeting to regular session.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ben Ivey: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Frank Hart, Chairman  
Union County Council

Kindra Horne, Acting Clerk to Council