

MINUTES
UNION COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2023 AT 5:30 P.M.
GRAND JURY ROOM AT UNION COUNTY COURTHOUSE
LIVE STREAMED TO WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GEARUPUNIONSC

Present: Chairman Phillip Russell, II, Councilman Danny Bright, Vice Chairman David Sinclair, Councilwoman Annie Smith, Councilwoman Carolyn Rutherford, Councilman John Flood, Acting Clerk to Council Linda Jolly and County Attorney Sammy Diamaduros.

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, 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 Phillip Russell, II called the meeting to order. Councilman Danny Bright gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice Chair David Sinclair.

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

Danny Bright, District 1 – Present
District 2-Vacant
David Sinclair, District 3 – Present
Annie Smith, District 4 - Present
Carolyn Rutherford, District 5 – Present
John Flood, District 6 – Present

Chairman Russell stated that all council members had been provided the minutes of the March meeting and called for a motion to approve the minutes as written. Vice Chairman David Sinclair made a motion to adopt the minutes as written, followed by a second from Councilman John Flood, all voted in favor of adopting the minutes and the motion passed unanimously.

Service Awards were presented by Chairman Russell as follows:
Deputy Roger Suber 10 years of service with the Sheriff's Office
Billy Keilser-10 years of service at Recycling
David Kitchens-35 years of service

Chairman Russell introduced Sheriff Bailey, who along with Investigator Spencer was on the agenda to discuss the Sheriff's Office Back to School supply drive. Investigator Spencer was not present. Sheriff Bailey said they were getting ready for the backpack back-to-school drive. This is an effort that the Sheriff's Office makes to get out in the community and do something positive. They have been doing this for three years. The first year they gave away 100 bags, the second year the City of Union Public

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Safety Department, Greater Union Church, and Jonesville PD joined in and they were able to give away over 550 book bags filled with supplies and fed all of the kids. They ran out of backpacks but made a list of those present that did not get a bag, took private donations, and were able to call those kids back in to receive a book bag later. To make the purchasing process easier, he went before City Council a few weeks ago, and is now asking County Council for some upfront funding, in the amount of \$1,000.00 so they can go ahead and start ordering what they need while waiting on the donations.

Councilman John Flood asked if this was seed money and would they still go after the donations, or did he want this amount every year? The Sheriff said that Ms. Ann sets the account up and they just need to be able to have some funds in it to start ordering while they are waiting on donations.

Chairman Russell pointed out that the school year would be starting earlier this year. He said that if the council approves, he could specify funds from the 793 Community Development fund to cover it. Vice Chairman David Sinclair made a motion to approve \$1,000.00 from fund 793 as up-front funding for the back-to-school drive. Council member Annie Smith seconded the motion, all members voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously. Sheriff Bailey thanked them and invited them all to attend the event.

Chairman Russell stated that council needed to consider approving an agreement to append our contract with PEBA to allow firefighters to participate in PORS, SC PEBA's Police Officers Retirement System. We currently do not have anyone who qualifies for this, but we need to get this taken care of for future needs if it ever arises.

John Flood made a motion and Carolyn Rutherford seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Russell stated the next item on the agenda was to approve the amended allocation agreement for the SC Opioid Litigation. The suit has been going on for a few years. A download link was in Council's packet with projections, none of it is guaranteed. Funds, if/when received will be restricted on how they can be spent. Union County is already a part of the suit. Mr. Russell called for a motion to approve the amended allocation agreement, Council member Rutherford made a motion, a second was made by council member Flood. Chairman Russell called for discussion, there was none, all were in favor and the vote passed unanimously.

Chairman Russell stated that the next item was to approve participation in a new (second) opioid suit against additional companies and the Council needed to decide whether to participate. This suit would abide by the same allocation agreement. Councilman Flood made a motion to participate, Councilman Bright made a second. Chairman Russell called for a discussion, there was none and the motion carried unanimous.

Chairman Russell brought the needs assessment list that had been provided to Council to everyone's attention. This list was created by Catawba Regional with input by this Council, previous Council and the public. He advised Council that only the top three things on the list would be eligible for grant funding. Mr. Russell stated that he needed a motion to approve this list. Vice Chairman Sinclair made a motion, and Council member Smith seconded the motion. Council member Flood clarified that we can only do the first three on the list? Chairman Russell said that the first three are the only ones we can get grants for but we can still pursue the others. Councilman Bright asked to verify that Council can still work on the others? Mr. Russell said yes. Councilmember Bright asked how far could we look into these? He wanted to know how much ground some of it could take? Mr. Russell said that if we got some

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other kind of grant that could cover one of the items, we could do it just not with CBDG funds. The motion carried with members Sinclair, Smith, Rutherford and Flood voting to approve and Councilman Bright being opposed to the motion.

Chairman Russell introduced Dolton Williams to make recommendations for appointment to the Development Board. Two of the seats open are required to be filled by members with one from a private utility company and one from a public utility company. Dolton recommended that the Council appoint Joe Nichols from the City of Union, Mr. Nichols is the Administrator and as such is over the Utility Department. Mr. Williams also recommended Andrena Powell Baker from Lockhart Power to serve on the board. Councilmember Annie Smith made the motion to appoint and Vice chairman Sinclair seconded the motion. Chairman Russell called for discussion, there was none. All were in favor and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Russell stated the Council would now consider approving to fill any vacant budgeted positions. Christina McDowell Executive Director at Healthy U, stated she was requesting to fill a Clinical Counselor and a Peer Support Specialist position; both are budgeted positions recently vacated. Vice Chair Sinclair made a motion to fill these two positions and Councilmember Flood seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried unanimously.

Probate Judge Toni Allen stated she needed to fill a recently vacated budgeted Clerk's position. Councilman Flood made a motion to fill, Vice Chair Sinclair made a second and the motion carried unanimously.

Clerk of Court Melanie Lawson stated she needed to fill recently vacated common pleas clerk position. Vice Chair Sinclair made the motion and Council member Smith seconded. Chairman Russell called for a vote and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Russell stated that we had \$57,000 in the capital fund that he would like to move to an account to cover moving expenses to the new South State building. He anticipates that moving will begin in June and there are several unknowns about what we will need as we move over. Council member Smith made the motion to allow the expenditure of the \$57,000 in capital for moving expenses, Council member Rutherford seconded, all voted in favor and the motion carried.

Chairman Russell opened the floor to elected officials. Sheriff Bailey came forward and said he wanted to let everyone know that as of May 1, 2023 the accreditation process would be completed with the Sheriff's Office. An auditing team from Columbia will come in and make sure all policies and procedures are in order. He also wanted the council to know that the K9 vehicles purchased through the 10-33 program are now on the road. No other elected officials took the floor.

Chairman Russell introduced the 1st Reading of the Budget Ordinance in title only. Councilmember Annie Smith made the motion to approve, Councilmember Flood seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and all voted in favor.

Chairman Russell went over his Supervisor's Report which will be attached to the minutes.

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Councilmember Flood asked about the number of cases pending but not tried (referring to general sessions cases that are pending which effects the inmate count at the Detention Center). Chairman Russell says it is still high but we've seen more cooperation and they are moving faster than in the past, Chairman Russell noted this was not unique to Union that several counties are having this same problem.

Chairman Russell called for committee reports, there were none. Chairman Russell called for Council announcements, there were none.

Councilmember Smith made a motion to adjourn, Vice Chair Sinclair seconded and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:07pm.

Phillip Russell, II, Chairman
Union County Council

Linda G. Jolly, Acting Clerk to Council