

UNION COUNTY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2017 AT 5:30 P.M.
GRAND JURY ROOM AT UNION COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Present: Chairman Frank Hart, Vice Chair Ben Ivey, Councilwoman Joan Little, Councilman Ralph Tucker, Councilman David Sinclair, Councilman Tommie Hill, Councilwoman Kacie Petrie, County Attorney Sammy Diamaduros and Clerk to Council Linda G. Jolly
Absent: None

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 to the members of the Union County Council, the County Attorney, the Union County Development Board, Mrs. Anne Brock with Clemson Extension, Mr. Mickey Gist, Mr. Robert Small, Mr. James Kollock, Mrs. Curtis Hunter and emailed to Mike Stevens at WBCU Radio Station, to Graham Williams at the County News, to Charles Warner at the Union Times, to Jason Spencer with the Spartanburg Herald Journal, to Allison Roberts with the Spartanburg Herald Journal, to the News Room at the Spartanburg Herald Journal, to Shell Suber at MHISC and to Randall Hanvey. A notice of the meeting was also posted on the County's website.

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

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

Joan Little, District 1 – Present
Ralph Tucker, District 2 – Present
David Sinclair, District 3 - Present
Ben Ivey, District 4 - Present
Tommie Hill, District 5 - Present
Kacie Petrie, District 6 – Present

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to dispense with reading of the minutes of the regular monthly meeting of the Union County Council held on February 14, 2017 and to adopt the minutes as written.

Ralph Tucker: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart presented a service award certificate and gift card for Dolton Williams for 5 years of service, for Rob Fraim for 10 years of service, for Charlotte Dawkins for 10 years of service and for Julia Phipps for 10 years of dedicated service to Union County.

County Auditor Brad Valentine stated McFarland Cascade purchased United Wood Treating Company in 2016. He talked to the South Carolina Department of Revenue about some big plans McFarland Cascade has for modernizing and expanding the business in the coming years. The company had applied for an extension on a five year abatement period on the personal property that was already in service at United Wood Treating who had already received the five year exemption one time. Any manufacturing company in the State of South Carolina where they invest over \$50,000 in personal property in a year gets an automatic exemption on county taxes and it is a statutory exemption. The new company has asked the exemption be extended to them on the equipment they have purchased. They

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have applied to the South Carolina Department of Revenue for the extension but County Council has to approve it. There was some discussion on the financial impact to the County. McFarland Cascade in the first year has invested \$2.3 million in personal property. They plan to invest an additional \$5-8 million over the next three years. The person he spoke with at the Department of Revenue expressed that in their opinion it would be in the best interest of the County to grant the extension.

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to grant the extension.

David Sinclair: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Torrance Inman with American Legion Post 22 provided Council with a handout. He stated they are asking that Timken Park be designated as the Post 22 baseball team's home field and all non-legion or individually sponsored teams that are allowed to play in the American Legion League negotiate individually with Timken Park.

Mr. Tommy Ford stated he was the District Director for American Legion Baseball for League 6. Independent baseball teams are happening all over the United States and there are various reasons for having independent teams. They are pretty much the same as a Post sponsored team and are approved by both the Nationals and the State Baseball Committee. They play by the same rules and most independent teams are run by legionnaires. There are a lot of issues in American Legion Baseball but that is something for the State Baseball Committee to handle and not County Council. He felt both teams should have equal time and both considered home teams at Timken Park. He asked Council to be fair by giving both teams the same rights at Timken Sports Complex as they do any other teams.

Mr. Kenneth Black with Union Fire and Rescue gave an update. Their primary goal is to provide rescue services, emergency medical service support as requested, and fire ground support. He went over their membership, total calls in 2016, profit and loss, insurance coverage and funding. He stated the County had been funding them at \$25,000 a year but had dropped that to \$15,000 a year due to budget constraints. He asked that Council include them as a line item in the County budget at the \$25,000 level.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Mr. Brown Fant would be retiring as the firm that handles the annual audit of the county financial records. Mr. Fant went over the Union County Audit for fiscal year 2015-2016 including the Auditor's Opinions, compliance, assets and liabilities, revenues and expenditures, and the Fund Balance. He mentioned the Road User Fee and Public Safety Fee which had been implemented due to the County taking over EMS. He stated a staff CPA would normally prepare some of the financial statements that he had done for the County and suggested the County consider having one on staff. He pointed out the County's obligations for retiree insurance and employee retirement. Revenues exceeded expenditures by approximately \$405,000 increasing the Fund Balance to \$3,858,000.

Eric Harold with EMS presented Mutual Aid Agreements with Newberry County, Laurens County, Spartanburg County, York County, Cherokee County, and Fairfield County. He stated this would allow Union County EMS to provide aid to neighboring counties and for neighboring counties to provide aid to Union County if the resources are available. If Union County transports a patient for one of the other counties then we bill the patient and if they transport a patient for Union County then they bill the patient. He said he needed Union County Council's approval before sending it to the other counties for their Council's approval.

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to approve the Mutual Aid Agreements as presented.

David Sinclair: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

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Chairman Frank Hart stated the County had loaned a van to the Union County Council on Aging because of a transportation issue. He proposed officially donating that van to the Council on Aging.

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to donate the van to the Council on Aging with the understanding that the County would have no ties or connections with the insurance and that everything would be converted over to them.

Ralph Tucker: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Council had previously approved a \$300,000 loan to Bonham Fire District for their new fire station. Council had approved the funds be loaned from the County's 301 Fund but instead proposed that it come from the County's 327 Fund.

Kacie Petrie: Made a motion to change the fund to be used for the loan of \$300,000 to the Bonham Fire District for their new fire station from the 301 Fund to the 327 Fund.

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

Chairman Frank Hart stated there was some interest from an individual wanting to purchase a county-owned vacant lot located at 1504 Main Street in Buffalo. He proposed advertising to take sealed bids for sale of the property and then Council determine if they want to accept the high bid.

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to advertise to take sealed bids for the sale of the property as proposed.

Tommie Hill: Seconded the motion.

Councilwoman Kacie Petrie stated the County owns a lot of property we don't need that Council should consider getting rid of. The vote on the motion was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Council needed to consider appointments to the boards and commissions. The Building Code Board of Appeals still has a vacancy for an alternate member but there were no applicants.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Council needed to consider appointments to the Airport Commission. There are two vacancies and three applicants who are Michael M. Mahan, Nancy C. Mahan, and Robert Steve Bogan.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to appoint Mark Lancaster to serve on the Airport Commission.

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

Chairman Frank Hart asked Councilwoman Joan Little if she had a recommendation but she stated she did not at this time.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Council needed to consider appointments to the Tax Assessor Appeals Board. There are four vacancies but no applicants.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Council needed to consider appointments to the Fair Board. There is one vacancy and sixteen applicants. The applicants were Harold Mark Cope, Heather Kimbrell, Debra L. Eaves, Pamela J. Ray, James S. Hunter, Scott Austin, Amanda Black, Weldon Eugene Rodgers, Steve Lewis, Phillip A. Hagan, Brian Gaston, Stephen Stone, Tommy E. Ford, Monty Cooke, Lyman David Owens and John Glenn.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to appoint Pamela J. Ray to serve on the Fair Board.

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

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Chairman Frank Hart stated Council needed to consider an appointment to the Library Board. There is one vacancy and one applicant who was Sally Palmer.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to appoint Sally Palmer to serve on the Library Board.

Kacie Petrie: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Council needed to consider an appointment to the Stadium Commission. There is one vacancy and no applicants.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to appoint Will Anthony to serve on the Stadium Commission.

Kacie Petrie: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Council needed to consider an appointment to the Tourism Commission. There is one vacancy and two applicants. The applicants were Rebecca N. Rochester and Charles A. Henderson.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to appoint Rebecca N. Rochester to serve on the Tourism Commission.

Kacie Petrie: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart stated the County has been approached by a developer who has proposed an option for the County owned property located at 101 W. Main Street in Union. This is the suite located next to the SC Works Office which is in a state of disrepair. He suggested advertising a Request for Proposals for a private developer to put forth a plan to Council. He had some recommendations on how to rate the proposals with certain criteria. They would rate the proposals to determine the one with the highest score then Council would consider granting ownership of that property with a development agreement that would have certain provisions as to what the developer would have to do.

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to proceed with it as suggested.

David Sinclair: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart stated the Sheriff has a vehicle he had purchased with Drug Forfeiture money. It is a 2009 Dodge Charger that they are ready to retire. The vehicle has to be sold and the funds have to go back into the Drug Forfeiture account. He proposed purchasing the vehicle for \$5,000 to be used for code enforcement. The Sheriff is in the process of purchasing a drug dog that cost about \$8,500 and this would help offset the expense.

David Sinclair: Made a motion to purchase the 2009 Dodge Charger from the Sheriff's Office for \$5,000.

Ralph Tucker: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Development Board Director Kathy Jo Lancaster stated Gestamp had announced their expansion which will result in a \$129 million investment and 130 new jobs. She thanked everyone involved with the project. In the beginning they announced it would be a \$278 million investment and thought by completion it would be close to that amount. This is Gestamp's second expansion in Union County.

Chairman Frank Hart called for any elected officials or department heads that wished to address Council.

Sheriff David Taylor stated they were about half way through with getting the fencing installed at the jail and detention center. He said Building Superintendent Kenny West was working with the camera company getting them installed at the jail.

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Detention Center Director Neil McKeown stated last week they prepared 1,586 meals for the detention center and the jail. They collected 1,215 pounds of roadside litter and did a demolition for the Sheriff for a pole building that was about to fall at the task force.

Code Enforcement Officer David Kitchens stated they handle animal control and litter control. They took over code enforcement for the City of Union in August. The City provided funds which were used to hire a trap setter. They now end up with about 120 cats a month. They hired a rescue adoption coordinator with the other part of the funds from the City so they could keep the Animal Shelter open longer hours and have expanded hours on every other Saturday. Their euthanasia rate is low due to that. In the first quarter of this year Litter Control picked up 1,800 bags of trash from on the side of the roads. They cleaned 192 roads in Union County. They have a Litter Control Officer that is paid from a grant so it is no cost to the County. In the last six months of 2016 code enforcement wrote up 687 homeowners for code violations. The first quarter of 2017 code enforcement answered 904 service calls.

Building Superintendent Kenny West stated they completed the renovations of the Jonesville EMS building. They constructed a security wall in the Clerk of Court's Office that SLED had required. They installed a new sound system at Timken Sports Complex.

Delinquent Tax Collector Lorene Bevis stated they almost finished their tax redemption reconciliation to determine any overage. People have been redeeming their property probably due to people getting their income tax back. They mailed the overage letters and have only had one to apply to get their overage money. They have 2,400 delinquent taxes to rollover which is about 300 less than last year.

Airport and Stadium Manager Ronnie Wade stated they have the yard sale at the Stadium this Saturday. At the airport he is trying to close out the grants to get the 5% reimbursement from the State before the end of the month. They purchased two teeter tot airplanes to put at the airport and hope to put some other playground equipment out there as well.

Victim Advocate Michelle Shugart stated they were in negotiations with the Department of Administration over victim assistance concerning the Act 141 money. They told her the funds had to be spent or the money would go into a pool for the State. They are trying to stay within the proper expenditure list to keep from having to give that money back.

Ronnie Wade stated they are preparing the fields at Timken Sports Complex and all over the County to get the facilities ready for High School ball and practices. They have already begun to play at Timken and they are working on the capital improvements for the Sports Complex. They are working with the Miracle League on the playground. They need a drone for aerial photographs for different projects in the County. The Sports Complex is booked every weekend until November. Chairman Frank Hart stated he talked to Mayor Thompson who offered to let the County use the City's drone if needed. Councilwoman Kacie Petrie stated opening day for Dixie Youth is Saturday, April 1st at 11:00 a.m.

EMS Director Eric Harold stated they are doing their mandatory skills checkoff with the medical control physician. They are practicing with a new intubation tool for extrication purchased through a grant-in-aid from the State last year. They are in the process of getting some pediatric patient care equipment

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and training free from the State to upgrade their pediatric patient care capability. He met with Jerry Brannon about renovations of the EMS facility.

Rieta Drinkwine with Carnegie Library stated they have \$63,000 in grant funding pending which will support the library, adult education at Clemson Extension, First Steps and any other organization willing to partner with the Library.

Katherine Pendergrass as Workforce Development Coordinator stated they have a Workforce Summit that was started March 30, 2015. She went over the Union County Partners group, the Union County HR Association meetings, the unemployment rates, the SCSEP Program and the success story for the month.

Tourism Director Curtis Hunter stated the Coon Hunt was a success even though they have issues with branding with County residents. It looks better if your County is embracing the events and the Tourism Commission has discussed that. They voted to separate the barbecue competition from the Uniquely Union Festival. The proceeds from the barbeque festival are going to Meals on Wheels as a fundraiser. They are looking at doing a holiday festival and one this summer. Some of them will be making presentations at the South Carolina Planners meeting tomorrow at the Main Street Junction.

Chairman Frank Hart presented for second reading an ordinance authorizing the first amendment of that certain fee agreement by and between Union County, South Carolina and Gonvauto South Carolina, LLC effective as of July 25, 2012 and relating to, without limitation, the addition of GES Recycling, South Carolina, LLC as a sponsor affiliate under the fee agreement for certain matters, and other matters related thereto.

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to accept second reading of the ordinance authorizing the first amendment of that certain fee agreement by and between Union County, South Carolina and Gonvauto South Carolina, LLC effective as of July 25, 2012 and relating to, without limitation, the addition of GES Recycling, South Carolina, LLC as a sponsor affiliate under the fee agreement for certain matters, and other matters related thereto.

Ralph Tucker: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Council had an update on each of the current capital projects they are looking at. Some are already approved projects that are underway and some are in the early conceptual stages. The projects are the Bonham Fire Department, EMS renovation, stadium renovation, Timken renovation, road construction for additional access to the jail to address some of the public safety issues, and a county office complex.

Chairman Frank Hart referred to the Community Indicators Project. They are working with the Upstate Workforce Investment Board and have kicked off the Public Health Task Force who has adopted the Eat Smart Move More initiative. Paige Rogers with DHEC is the committee chair and she will be at the April Council meeting to present an update. He asked Councilmembers to attend the meeting on April 13th at 8:30 a.m. at the SC Works Office to see what they are doing. They are working to kick off the Educational Task Force.

Chairman Frank Hart stated the Planning Commission has held multiple meetings and have developed three focus groups which are land use, economic development, and transportation; community facilities,

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housing, and population; and natural resources and cultural resources. He asked each councilmember to identify an area they would like to participate in. He asked Council to attend their next meeting on March 28th at 5:30 p.m. at the Annex Building.

Chairman Frank Hart stated IT is working on getting the server upgrades to the AS400 completed. They are working on implementation of a Purchase Order and receiver process in procurement targeting July of 2017 to implement in one department to begin with. The goal would be to expand this to include all the departments. They are working on an electronic time tracking system which would track and report employee time, figure their hours automatically to be imported into the payroll system and then checks are issued. They are looking at doing trials on the system in August. They are working on an ORI for the Detention Center as they are required by law before the release of an inmate to run a criminal background check to make sure there are no warrants against that individual. Cyber security continues to be an issue and SLED has required the County to do dual authentication which they hope to have done soon.

Chairman Frank Hart stated he had talked with all the elected officials and discussed the personnel policy which they plan to update. He stated the Procurement Policy is being updated through Catawba Regional Council of Governments.

Chairman Frank Hart stated Council would have to select a new auditing firm to handle the audit of the county financial records. He said they would be contacting agencies to make presentations.

Chairman Frank Hart reminded Councilmembers their Statement of Economic Interest report was due by March 30, 2017.

Chairman Frank Hart stated he was concerned about the State Retirement System. Funds go into the system from employer contributions, employee contributions and investment returns. The Retirement System had been figuring about 7.5% on returns from investments but it has actually been coming in around 4.9% creating a deficit. They are planning to lower it to 7.2% but that is not enough. They are proposing to raise the employer contributions by 2% at an estimated cost to the County of \$166,000. They want to raise it by one percent each year for the next five years which would mean an increase of roughly \$80,000 a year. The County is looking at over a half a million dollars in added expense over the course of the next five years. The employee contributions will also be increasing.

Chairman Frank Hart stated the Building Department is using a new software system called City Force where the clerk schedules the inspection and the inspection is done to determine if they do or do not pass inspection. They also take pictures of the inspection and then it is all uploaded into the system to provide better records and documentation. They are in the process of updating the condemnation process based on the IPMC. They are going to be accepting electronic plans rather than paper plans.

Chairman Frank Hart called for any committee reports but there were none.

Chairman Frank Hart entertained a motion to go into executive session to discuss a personnel issue and an economic development related issue.

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to go into executive session to discuss a personnel issue and an economic development related issue.

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Ralph Tucker: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Union County Council went into executive session to discuss a personnel issue and an economic development related issue.

Chairman Frank Hart stated they were ready to come out of executive session and no votes were taken.

Ben Ivey: Made a motion to come out of executive session and return to regular session.

Ralph Tucker: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The Union County Council returned to regular session.

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

Kacie Petrie: Made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ralph Tucker: Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Frank Hart, Chairman
Union County Council

Linda G. Jolly, Clerk to Council