



MINUTES GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

Committee of the Whole

April 19, 2016

4:30 p.m.

County Square – Conference Room D

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Bob Taylor, Chairman
Mr. Butch Kirven, Vice Chairman
Mr. Joe Dill ARRIVED 4:32 p.m.
Mr. Joe Baldwin ARRIVED 4:45 p.m.
Mr. Willis Meadows
Mr. Sid Cates

Mr. Jim Burns
Mrs. Xanthene Norris
Mrs. Liz Seman
Mrs. Lottie Gibson ABSENT
Mr. Lynn Ballard
Mr. Fred Payne

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place and agenda was posted on the bulletin board at the County Square and made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned Citizens.

COUNCIL MEMBER(S) ABSENT:

Lottie Gibson, District 25

STAFF PRESENT:

Joe Kernell, County Administrator
John Hansley, Deputy County Administrator
Mark Tollison, County Attorney
Theresa Kizer, Clerk to Council
Regina McCaskill, Deputy Clerk to Council
Paula Gucker, Assistant County Administrator, Public Works ARRIVED 4:55 p.m.
Eric Vinson, Director, Planning and Code Enforcement ARRIVED 4:55 p.m.
Sandra Yudice, Assistant to the County Administrator
Beverly James, Executive Director, Greenville County Library

OTHERS PRESENT

None

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bob Taylor

INVOCATION

Councilor Jim Burns

Item (3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Councilor Norris moved to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2016 Regular Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Motion carried unanimously by Council Members present.

Item (4) 2016 TIGER GRANT

*Presented by: Keith R. Brockington
 Transportation Planning Manager*

TIGER VII Grant

- **Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery**
- USDOT Federal Grant
- Eighth Annual Round
- Focus on transportation project that are:
 - Transformative
 - Innovative
 - Collaborative
- Supports
 - Job Creation
 - Workforce Accessibility
 - Economic Development
 - Air Quality Improvement
 - Multimodal Choice
 - Planning Continuity
 - Build off existing planning efforts

TIGER VII Application

- Creating Circuits of Economic Success
- Joint Venture
 - City of Greenville (applying entity)
 - Greenville County
 - Greenville Transit Authority (Greenlink)
- Transform the Greenlink transit system into a regional transportation network
 - Eight (8) zero-emission electric buses
 - Two (2) charging stations
 - Seven (7) supporting circulator diesel buses
 - Twenty-nine (29) multimodal transit stations
 - Five (5) b-cycle bike share stations
 - Five-mile extension of the Swamp Rabbit Trail
 - Cleveland Park to CU-ICAR
 - Seven (7) pedestrian bridges
 - Six (6) connection trails
 - Hits quite a few low-income areas needing transportation to jobs, healthcare, worship, etc.

Funding Snapshot

- Total Project
 - \$24,087,487
- TIGER Fund Request for USDOT
 - \$11,489,790
- Local Match (subject to change)
 - \$12,597,697

Questions

Councilor Cates inquired as to why electric buses were preferred over diesel buses since they were more expensive.

Mr. Brockington stated diesel buses had several drawbacks which included emissions and technology. He added a higher level of technology was more attractive to the USDOT when making a decision regarding the TIGER Grant. Mr. Brockington stated the USDOT wanted to see how a transportation system would be transformed into something for the 21st century as opposed to just expanding the current system. He stated the TIGER Grant was all capital and the buses were purchased out of USDOT and local match money. Mr. Brockington stated operating costs were the responsibility of local entities but were much cheaper if electric buses were used.

Councilor Cates stated the use of electric buses was much more attractive to Washington even though diesel buses were cheaper and the proposal would be less.

Councilor Burns stated it appeared some information was missing from the packet provided. He stated the local match was \$8.7 million and inquired if Greenville County was being asked to allocate that amount.

Mr. Brockington stated the breakdown for the local cash match was as follows: \$100,000 – Community Foundation of Greenville, \$500,000 – The Hollingsworth Foundation, \$15,000 – Piedmont Health Foundation, \$200,000 – SCRA, \$2,500,000 – City of Greenville, \$5,500,000 – Greenville County, and \$99,000 – private individual.

Mr. Burns asked where the \$5,500,000 from the County would come from.

Mr. Brockington stated that amount had already been allocated for the Swamp Rabbit Greenway extension.

Councilor Burns inquired if Greenville County had \$5,500,000 allocated for the Swamp Rabbit Trail.

Joe Kernell stated there was currently \$1,500,000 allocated in the budget and proceeds from the proposed sale of 301 River Street would go to the trail for a total of \$5,500,000.

Councilor Burns inquired what the money would be used for.

Joe Kernell stated the City of Greenville had agreed to provide \$2,500,000 to the County for the Swamp Rabbit Trail for bridge construction, if they could be built for that amount. He added the rest of the funding was for the trail construction for the County. Mr. Kernell added some feeder trails were also included that were totally grant funded. He stated the funding the County had in place for the trail provided a big chunk of the matching funds which made the application look so attractive. Mr. Kernell stated if the grant was not received, funding was still in place for the trail.

Councilor Burns inquired if \$8 million would be used for the stretch of the trail from East Washington to CU-ICAR.

Mr. Brockington stated the section to be constructed would be from Cleveland Park down parallel to Laurens Road down to CU-ICAR in addition to the trail connections which would connect communities from Cherrydale to CU-ICAR.

Councilor Burns stated he was under the impression the City of Greenville had deleted the caveat stating they were only giving money for bridges.

Joe Kernell stated when the issue of the sale of 301 River Street was discussed with Council, everyone seemed to be in agreement. He added proceeds from the sale of the River Street property must be used for that type of activity, as it was not General Fund money. Mr. Kernell stated the Mayor of Greenville had indicated they may not require bridges in all the places originally sited.

Councilor Burns stated he thought the money from the potential sale of 301 River Street would be placed in the Hospitality Tax Fund to be used on projects; but not that all of it was to be designated for the Swamp Rabbit Trail. Councilor Burns requested clarification regarding multimodal system Swamp Rabbit Trail Extension and Public Transit SRT connected.

Mr. Brockington stated the trail was currently primarily used for recreation; however, with the new connection trails, it would become more of a means to access transportation.

Councilor Ballard inquired about the \$1.9 million that was designated as an in-kind match.

Joe Kernell stated the \$1.9 million was the value of the Swamp Rabbit Trail property.

Councilor Seman stated the Swamp Rabbit Trail was a key economic development driver for the County and the connectivity to the outlying areas of the County was needed.

Councilor Norris stated the Swamp Rabbit Trail was good for recreation but lacking for transportation purposes, especially in the unseen areas of the County.

Councilor Meadows stated he agreed with Councilor Norris. He stated he understood the money from the potential sale of 301 River Street would have to be put back into the Hospitality Tax Fund. He was not aware it would all be used for the Swamp Rabbit Trail. Councilor Meadows asked what would have happened if the property sold for \$3 million.

Joe Kernell stated the grant match would have been less. He stated the match was the key and the grant was not limited to the southern part of the County. There were a total of ten possible sites for bridges but the actual number would be determined by the price. Mr. Kernell stated the trail was funded except for some of the spurs to link communities.

Mr. Brockington stated trails would be built to connect communities with the Swamp Rabbit Trail as well as the electric bus system.

Councilor Kirven stated the change to circulator routes was specifically designed for low-income neighborhoods to give the residents better access to connect to jobs, education and other services.

ACTION:

Councilor Kirven moved to approve a resolution stating Greenville County Council is committed to provide (a) an additional in-kind match that will include the value of the abandoned railroad corridor, staff time, and equipment as described in the TIGER VIII grant application; (b) ongoing maintenance to the SRT transportation corridor; and (c) funding to support Greenlink's operating budget resulting from its expanded transit system, which will be included in the FY2019 budget.

Councilor Burns stated he did not like being pressured into making a decision without having all the facts. He added the only consolation was the County could refuse the grant, if awarded.

Councilor Meadows stated the operational expenses were a concern.

Joe Kernell reminded Council they were not obligated to accept the grant, if awarded.

Motion as presented carried unanimously by Council Members present.

Item (5)

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS - PRESENTATION

*Presented by: Steve Pelissier, Executive Director
Appalachian Council of Governments*

- Presented the Annual Report.
- Thanked Councilor Dill, Councilor Gibson, Councilor Meadows and Councilor Kirven for serving on the ACOG Board of Directors
- Councilor Dill elected as Secretary of the board
- Greenville County's Annual Investment - \$151,759
- Return on Investment to Greenville County (2015) - \$7,305,298
- Return on Investment ratio of \$48 to \$1
- \$2.8 million to complete US 25 / SC 11 interchange project
- \$1.66 million Aging Services Program
- \$703,500 Small Business and Entrepreneurial Loan Program
- \$2.1 million in private capital investment resulting from loan programs
- Reviewed all other services provided by ACOG to Greenville County

Item (6)

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS ATTENDANCE

Theresa Kizer presented the following information to Council:

- Greenville County Boards and Commissions attendance policy
- List of bylaws, if any, for a board or commission with a member in violation of the policy
- List of members in violation of the policy
- Individual attendance sheets as provided by each board or commission liaison
- Arena District – Barry Formanack was in violation of the attendance policy for 2015 and was reappointed to the board on 04-05-16
- GADC – Hunter Howard was in violation of the attendance policy for 2015 (term ends May 2016).

Chairman Taylor asked if the boards and commissions could pass an issue at a quorum level; whether it was based on the number of board members or number of members present.

Mark Tollison stated it may be possible but that issue was not researched.

Chairman Taylor stated illness could impact a member's attendance.

Theresa Kizer stated there was no provision in the current policy for long term illness. She stated in the past, some members have resigned if an illness impacted their ability to serve.

Councilor Burns stated Council needed to make a decision regarding the individuals who were in violation of the current policy as Council had already taken action on three individuals at a prior meeting. He added the policy may need revision.

Mark Tollison recommended Council take a course of action at the next meeting.

Chairman Taylor stated he did not want Council to act hastily.

Councilor Ballard stated one board member listed had a medical issue. He inquired if there would be a provision for extenuating circumstances.

Chairman Taylor stated any extenuating circumstances would need to be investigated. He cited the Construction Board of Appeals and the Chairman Nelson Neal. Chairman Taylor stated Mr. Neal was hospitalized with a bee sting and almost died.

Councilor Cates asked Theresa Kizer if the boards and commissions were divided into Major and Minor subcategories.

Theresa Kizer responded they were not divided. She informed Council the information was provided to give Council an opportunity to review the data and decide on action, if needed. She added the information was not intended to be used as a vehicle for change to the current policy.

Councilor Seman suggested sending a letter to the Chairman of each board or commission regarding the attendance policy and infractions. She also suggested a letter be sent to each board member in question them informing of Council's intended action to remove.

Councilor Cates stated the Chairmen were likely to ask what they were supposed to do about the situation.

Councilor Dill stated each member had volunteered and attendance was part of the process.

Councilor Seman stated the individuals could resign prior to being removed by Council. She stated each board and commission was important and the volunteers' time and efforts were valued; however, by not taking action, it sent the message that the Planning Commission was more important than other boards or commissions.

Councilor Burns stated some boards or commissions had changed meeting dates which may have caused a conflict for some of the individuals. He stated the current policy does not allow for any exceptions.

Councilor Norris stated in some instances, membership was based on criteria. She stated it was important to let members know that attendance at meetings was crucial.

Theresa Kizer stated attendance was greatly emphasized during Boards and Commissions Orientation. Ms. Kizer requested more detailed direction from Council regarding information to be requested.

Mark Tollison suggested a letter should be sent to the Chairman of each committee reiterating the current attendance policy, notifying them of member infractions and justification for those absences.

Councilor Seman stated the letter should also specifically state Council would be taking action by the first scheduled meeting in May of 2015.

Item (7)

ADJOURNMENT

ACTION:

Councilor Burns moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

Motion to adjourn carried unanimously by Council Members present.

Respectfully submitted:

Theresa B. Kizer, Clerk to Council