



GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes
Committee of the Whole
December 1, 2020
4:07 p.m.

County Square - Council Chambers

Council Members

Mr. Butch Kirven, Chairman
Mr. Willis Meadows, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Xanthene Norris, Chairman Pro Tem
Mr. Joe Dill
Mr. Mike Barnes
Mr. Sid Cates
Mr. Rick Roberts
Mr. Bob Taylor
Mrs. Liz Seman
Mr. Ennis Fant, Sr.
Mr. Lynn Ballard
Mr. Dan Tripp

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

Council Members Absent

None

Staff Present

Joe Kernell, *County Administrator*
Mark Tollison, *County Attorney*
Regina McCaskill, *Clerk to Council*
Jessica Stone, *Deputy Clerk to Council*
Pam Gilliam, *Administrative Assistant, Council Office*
Paula Gucker, *Assistant County Administrator, Public Works*

Others Present

None

Call to Order

Chairman Kirven

Invocation

Councilor Joe Dill

Item (3) Approval of Minutes

Action: Councilor Roberts moved to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2020, Regular Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item (4) Unification of Sewer Collection Services

Action: Councilor Seman moved to approve an ordinance authorizing (1) the consolidation of Berea Public Service District; Gantt Fire, Sewer and Police District; Marietta Water, Water, Fire, Sanitation, and Sewer District; Parker Sewer and Fire Sub-District; Taylors Fire and Sewer District; and Wade Hampton Fire and Sewer District into Metropolitan Sewer Sub-District; (2) approving a plan of consolidation in connection therewith; and (3) other matters related thereto.

Councilor Taylor stated the proposed ordinance would essentially put all the individual sewer authorities that were affiliated with a fire district under a common system.

Motion as presented carried by a roll call vote of nine (Dill, Roberts, Taylor, Norris, Seman, Fant, Ballard, Kirven and Tripp) in favor and three (Barnes, Meadows and Cates) in opposition.

Item (5) Creation of the Berea Fire Service Area, Gantt Fire Service Area, Parker Fire Service Area, Taylors Fire Service Area and Wade Hampton Fire Service Area

Action: Councilor Tripp moved to approve an ordinance creating the Berea Fire Service Area, Gantt Fire Service Area, Parker Fire Service Area, Taylors Fire Service Area, and Wade Hampton Fire Service Area, each in Greenville County, South Carolina, and Boards of Fire Control for each such Fire Service Area, approving the annual levy and collection of Ad Valorem taxes and/or imposition of rates and charges for the operation and maintenance thereof within each Fire Service Area, approving the issuance of general obligation bonds on behalf of each such Fire Service Area, and other matters relating thereto.

Councilor Dill asked what would happen to the benefits of the firemen and everyone involved in those fire districts.

Chairman Kirven stated it was the intent to keep the Fire Districts' benefits intact; a lot depended on subsequent and future agreements between the parties.

Councilor Meadows stated those questions should be answered before Council voted. He felt the workshop was one sided; it concerned him that they were taking over the fire districts and sewer services with many unanswered questions.

Councilor Cates stated he did not understand why the consolidation had to be pushed through so fast; Council Members did not have answers to all of their questions.

Chairman Kirven stated the effective date would not be until July 1, 2021; this would provide time to answer questions and make decisions based on the best information at the time.

Councilor Tripp stated it was his understanding that as long as the existing SPD's were willing to sign over the sewer authority portion of their operations, they would have the ability to sign an agreement to keep their fire districts in place. Those agreements could not be reached until all authorizations were in place.

Councilor Roberts stated the sewer would be managed as one organization; the County was not assuming responsibility for the sewer lines.

Councilor Barnes asked if the issue could be brought up as a referendum instead of being decided by Council.

Councilor Cates asked if Council's decision could be dissolved within the 6 months.

Chairman Kirven stated subsequent actions by Council would be required in order to move forward; the proposed ordinance was the beginning of a process that would lead to the end result. County Council would continue to be involved and required to act throughout the process, until implementation took place.

Councilor Cates stated Carol Elliot, with MetroConnects, had made it clear that the sewer employees would be offered jobs; it was not clear on the fire side of things. He asked if that decision should be up to the Boards.

Chairman Kirven stated the County was primarily concerned about the sewer; however, State Law required it to be done this way so they could reach a point where the fire districts could continue as they were and still operate under the policies of their respective commissions.

Councilor Roberts asked what would happen if the fire service ordinance was not approved by Council.

Chairman Kirven stated the two ordinances went “hand in glove”; they worked together at this point.

Motion as presented carried by a roll call vote of nine (Dill, Roberts, Taylor, Norris, Seman, Fant, Ballard, Kirven and Tripp) in favor and three (Barnes, Meadows and Cates) in opposition.

Item (8) **Adjournment**

Action: Councilor Cates moved to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Regina McCaskill
Clerk to Council