



GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes
Organizational Meeting
January 10, 2023
6:00 p.m.

County Square - Council Chambers

Council Members

Mr. Dan Tripp, *Vice-Chairman, District 28*
Mr. Butch Kirven, *Chairman Pro Tem, District 27*
Mr. Joey Russo, *District 17*
Mr. Mike Barnes, *District 18*
Mr. Benton Blount, *District 19*
Mr. Stephen Shaw, *District 20*
Mr. Chris Harrison, *District 21*
Mr. Stan Tzouvelekas, *District 22*
Mr. Alan Mitchell, *District 23*
Mrs. Liz Seman, *District 24*
Mr. Ennis Fant, Sr., *District 25*
Mr. Rick Bradley, *District 26*

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place and agenda was posted online and 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
Chris Antley, Assistant County Attorney
John Hansley, Deputy County Administrator
Regina McCaskill, Clerk to Council
Jessica Stone, Deputy Clerk to Council
Pam Gilliam, Administrative Assistant
Terrance Galloway, Information Systems

Hesha Gamble, Assistant County Administrator
Tee Coker, Assistant County Administrator
Shannon Herman, Assistant County Administrator
Nicole Wood, Assistant County Administrator
John Vandermosten, Assistant County Administrator
Meredith Papapieris, Director of Grants and Special Projects
Bob Mihalic, Governmental Relations
Rashida Jeffers-Campbell, Planning Director

Others Present

Sheriff Hobart Lewis
Steve Cole, Director, Greater Greenville Sanitation

Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Dan Tripp

Invocation

Chairman Pro Tem Butch Kirven

Pledge of Allegiance

Item (4) Election of the County Council Chairman

Vice-Chairman Tripp passed the gavel to Chairman Pro Tem Kirven as he was a candidate for County Council Chairman. He requested Mr. Kirven conduct the election of County Council Chairman.

Chairman Pro Tem Kirven stated former Council Member Dr. Bob Taylor had been hospitalized earlier in the day. He requested a moment of silence for Dr. Taylor.

Chairman Pro Tem Kirven opened the floor for nominations for County Council Chairman.

Action: Councilor Fant nominated Councilor Tripp for County Council Chairman.

Mr. Fant stated Mr. Tripp possessed the experience and visionary leadership to unite Council as well as chart out a proper direction to prepare for the future for the citizens of Greenville County.

Action: Councilor Fant stated if there were no additional nominations, he moved to close nominations and elect by acclamation Councilor Tripp as County Council Chairman.

Chairman Pro Tem Kirven asked if there were any additional nominations.

Action: There being no other nominations, Councilor Seman moved to close nominations.

Motion to close nominations carried.

Motion to elect Councilor Tripp as County Council Chairman carried.

Item (5) Transferring of the Gavel

Chairman Pro Tem Kirven passed the gavel to Chairman Tripp.

Item (6) Election of the County Council Vice-Chairman

Chairman Tripp opened the floor for nominations for County Council Vice-Chairman.

Councilor Harrison stated several members of the community, whom he respected and trusted, had encouraged him to run for Council Vice-Chairman. He had thought long and hard about the issue; he was honored to be held in that regard. Mr. Harrison stated he planned to help lead Council by any means necessary and in any position or title he was given. He wanted to help move Council forward by incorporating his beliefs and values into the decision-making process. A key value he cherished was relationships and relationship building. It was better to work with people you trusted and had built a relationship with. Mr. Harrison stated with the addition of the four new Members, he truly believed Council had good momentum and a great team to “move the ball down the field” over the next two years. A contested Vice-Chairman vote would not align with the goal to change course, following a challenging and divisive past two years; Council needed to show, by its actions, that it had changed. Mr. Harrison stated he wanted to take his “name out of the hat.”

Action: Councilor Harrison nominated Councilor Seman for County Council Vice-Chairman.

Action: Councilor Harrison stated if there were no additional nominations, he moved to close nominations and elect by acclamation Councilor Seman as County Council Vice-Chairman.

Without objection, the motion to close nominations and elect by acclamation Councilor Seman as County Council Vice-Chairman carried.

Chairman Tripp thanked his colleagues for their support; and stated he did not take the position lightly. He thanked his wife, his children and his brother, John, for their support. Mr. Tripp stated he recently attended a visitation service and was struck by a Bible verse that was apropos to the moment:

“But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister” (Matthew 20:26-28 KJV)

Mr. Tripp stated that verse was the true definition of service and leadership. He was committed to his colleagues to be a servant rather than a commanding leader. Mr. Tripp told Councilor Fant he never thought they would be able to form an alliance and bring peace to Council. Mr. Fant had been solid in everything he had said and done over the past six months. Mr. Tripp stated he would honor him and serve with him. He congratulated Council Seman for being elected Council Vice-Chairwoman; he thanked her for her service and stated he looked forward to serving with her. Mr. Tripp stated he appreciated Councilor Kirven’s years of experience and all that he brought to Council. He thanked Councilor Harrison and Councilor Barnes for working the last six months to bring peace to Council. Mr. Tripp stated the four new Council Members had been impressive as they had been attending Council meetings the last six months. He knew where their hearts were and he knew they wanted to serve their constituents. Mr. Tripp stated he knew that last two years had been very trying; he thanked staff for their support during that difficult time.

Mr. Tripp stated during the previous evening’s meeting, five Council Members, including himself, took an oath to the South Carolina Constitution and the Constitution of the United States. No oath was taken to a party or a faction. Council Members were elected to serve Greenville County and the residents of their respective districts. As Chairman, he was committed to having a conservative and restrained course for Council in order to be good stewards of the taxpayers money.

Chairman Tripp stated the next regular meeting of County Council was scheduled for January 24, 2023. The primary focus of the meeting was to adopt any Council Rules changes. Mr. Tripp stated he hoped to have a workshop prior to the meeting.

Item (7) **Adjournment**

Action: Chairman Pro Tem Kirven moved to adjourn the meeting.

Without objection, the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Regina G. McCaskill
Clerk to Council