

GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
SEPTEMBER 25, 2023  
5:00 P.M.

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

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

CHAIRMAN, BUTCH KIRVEN  
VICE CHAIRMAN, LIZ SEMAN  
ENNIS FANT  
CHRIS HARRISON  
DAN TRIPP

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:**

BENTON BLOUNT

**OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

ALAN MITCHELL  
STAN TZOUVELEKAS

**STAFF PRESENT:**

JOE KERNELL, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
REGINA MCCASKILL, CLERK TO COUNTY COUNCIL  
VANESSA PAYNE, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT  
JESSICA STONE, DEPUTY CLERK TO COUNCIL  
MARK TOLLISON, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
NICOLE WOOD, ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Kirven called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**INVOCATION:**

Councilor Harrison provided the invocation.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Councilor Tripp moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 11, 2023. The motion carried unanimously.

## **CHEROKEE LANDING – MCIP WORKFORCE HOUSING:**

Council adopted the Workforce and Affordable Housing Policy on October 18, 2022 that provides Special Source Credits to projects which reserve at least 20% of their total housing units as Workforce/Affordable units with the required mix of 40% AMI housing units, 60% AMI housing units and 80% AMI housing units.

This request was held from the Finance Committee on August 28, 2023.

This is a request to approve incentives on Project Cherokee Landing as allowed under the Workforce Affordable Housing Policy and place the project in a Multi-County Park with Special Source Credits.

Nicole Wood, Assistant County Administrator, Mark Tollison, County Attorney and Ray Jones, Parker Poe, were present to answer questions of the committee.

Mr. Jones gave an overview of the Cherokee Landing project. He stated the project has been in the making for about two years. He stated the biggest problem was with the appraiser and getting the property properly appraised.

Chairman Kirven stated that Councilor Blount was not present, but had expressed his opposition regarding the project which will be located in his district.

Councilor Harrison stated he believed that the County (staff) needed to take a closer look at the Affordable Housing Policy to address some things in the policy that were not clear. He also stated that he did not want to penalize this project due to this issue.

Councilor Fant stated that he adamantly supported this project. He also stated that he believed this project could be used as a model across the state/country. He stated he likes the 60% AMI as opposed to tax credits from the County to help developers. He also stated that it would not be fair to penalize this project due to an accidental loophole in the policy. He suggested that the County (staff) regroup to address removing the loophole going forward.

Councilor Seman stated that the Council needed to be careful of avoiding unintended consequences as it relates to tax credits. Ms. Seman also stated that projects of this nature require many pieces of the puzzle in order work. She also stated if the County wanted to continue to bring in affordable housing, she would hate to see the County lose out on projects because of the tax credit factor.

Councilor Tripp stated that this project would have already been approved a year ago under a prior chairmanship. He mentioned that since that time, interest rates have increased. Mr. Tripp stated that he is sympathetic to the developers of this project and believes the project should move forward; he apologized for the delay.

## **CHEROKEE LANDING – MCIP WORKFORCE HOUSING CON'T:**

Chairman Kirven asked for clarification on the difference between affordable housing, workforce housing and low income housing. Mr. Kirven believed it would be helpful to clarify the difference in the policy. He also mentioned the developers return on investment and the 20% referenced in the County's policy. Mr. Kirven further stated most of his concerns could be addressed by amending portions of the policy.

Mr. Jones addressed some of the concerns regarding the project and stated that he would be happy to assist the County with making the necessary changes to the policy in order to address concerns that were not clear and fix any loopholes. He stated he would be glad to assist pro bono.

Mark Tollison, County Attorney stated that the next item on the agenda, MCIP for Workhouse Housing would apply to this project (Cherokee Landing). Cherokee Landing would be located in this Multi-County Industrial Park.

Councilor Seman moved to approve the ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of a Special Source Credit Agreement by and between Greenville County and Cherokee Landing, LP with respect to certain investment in qualifying infrastructure related to the construction of a multifamily commercial housing development in the County to include certain Affordable and Workforce Housing in the County whereby project is subject to payments in lieu of taxes by virtue of its location in a Joint County Industrial and Business Park. The motion carried unanimously.

### **MCIP FOR WORKFORCE HOUSING:**

This is an ordinance to authorize and approve an agreement for the development of a Joint Industrial and Business Park (Workhouse Housing) by and between Greenville County and Anderson County.

Mark Tollison, County Attorney, was present to answer questions of the committee.

Councilor Seman moved to approve the ordinance to authorize and approve an agreement for the development of a Joint Industrial and Business Park (Workhouse Housing) by and between Greenville County and Anderson County. The motion carried unanimously.

### **PROHIBIT USING PUBLIC FUNDS FOR LOBBYIST OR PUBLIC RELATIONS REPRESENTATIVES:**

This is an ordinance to prohibit Greenville County from using public funds to engage lobbyist or public relations representatives.

Chairman Kirven asked Mr. Kernell, County Administrator to share some information regarding lobbyist as it relates to the County of Greenville.

## **PROHIBIT USING PUBLIC FUNDS FOR LOBBYIST OR PUBLIC RELATIONS REPRESENTATIVES CON'T:**

Mr. Kernell stated how the County benefited from the use of lobbyist and public relations representatives. He stated that the lobbyist are in place to make sure the County is informed of any issues or concerns from the State that are relevant to County business. The use of lobbyist insures that the County is kept abreast of any relevant changes by the State. He also stated the County pays around \$30,000 for a lobbyist which is approved in the County's budget.

Councilor Seman stated there is also an SCAC component as it relates to the use of lobbyist. She stated that with Greenville County being the largest county in the state, it was necessary and beneficial to have someone looking out for the County's best interest. She also expressed it was her belief that we needed more public relations representation, not less.

Councilor Harrison asked if there were any negative aspects as it pertains to the use of lobbyist.

Mr. Kernell stated he was not aware of any negative aspects as it relates to the use of lobbyist.

Councilor Tripp referenced Section 2 of the ordinance where it refers to no public funds received or collected shall be used to directly employ or contract with persons or entities engaged in public relations. He stated that all expenditures associated with paying lobbyist were authorized in the County budget.

Councilor Fant moved to deny approval of an ordinance to prohibit Greenville County from using public funds to engage lobbyist or public relations representatives. The motion carried unanimously.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

The Finance Committee went into executive session at 5:30 to discuss a contractual matter. The committee came out of executive session at 5:35.

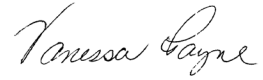
Councilor Fant left the meeting at 5:31.

Councilor Tripp moved to approve an ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of a fee in lieu of tax agreement by and between Greenville County and Project Slurp. The motion carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no additional business to come before the Finance Committee, the meeting adjourned at 5:37.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vanessa Payne".

Vanessa Payne  
Executive Assistant