



Richland County Council
ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 26, 2024 – 6:00 PM
Council Chambers
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Overture Walker, Chair; Derrek Pugh, Yvonne McBride, Paul Livingston, and Don Weaver

OTHERS PRESENT: Chakisse Newton, Cheryl English, Jason Branham, Gretchen Barron, Jesica Mackey, Ashiya Myers, Stacey Hamm, Michelle Onley, Angela Weathersby, Lori Thomas, Anette Kirylo, Patrick Wright, Ashley Fullerton, Tamar Black, Jennifer Wladischkin, Michael Byrd, Kyle Holsclaw, Jackie Hancock, Leonardo Brown, Quinton Epps, Dale Welch, John Thompson, Dante Roberts, Bill Davis, John McKinsey, Sandra Haynes, Aric Jensen, Michael Maloney, Shirani Fuller, Michael Zaprzalka, and Tish Gonzales

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Councilman Overture Walker called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 PM.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. February 27, 2024 – Mr. Livingston moved to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Mr. Weaver.
In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker
The vote in favor was unanimous.
3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Mr. Livingston moved to adopt the agenda as published, seconded by Mr. Weaver.
In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker
The vote in favor was unanimous.
4. **ITEMS FOR ACTION**
 - a. Animal Care – Animal Care Ordinance Revision – Ms. Sandra Haynes, Animal Services Director, stated the revisions serve as the foundation for ensuring the welfare and safety of both our human and animal residents. By working with stakeholders, they have carefully crafted the ordinance revisions that reflect our shared values and commitment to creating a thriving community. Throughout this process, let us remember the importance of balancing the need for public safety with the rights of animal welfare. The proposed changes are:
 - Changed the title of Chapter 5 from “Animal and Fowl” to “Animal”
 - Inclusion of additional definitions
 - Separation of the pet license from the commercial pet breeder
 - Generally revised animal care
 - Deletion of the “Community Cat Diversion Program”
 - Addition of a “Dangerous and Vicious” section
 - Addition of a “Tethering” section
 - Addition of language to allow the Animal Care Department to request petition hearings even if the animal is not in the custody of Animal Care

Ms. Haynes noted the “Community Cat Diversion Program” was deleted from the ordinance because the County no longer has the program. In 2017, the shelter lost its veterinarian; therefore, we could no longer pick up the cats, take them to the shelter to get sprayed and neutered, and return them to the community. Now, we offer citizens vouchers, which allow them to trap the cat(s), take them to the Human Society or Pawmetto Lifeline to be spayed or neutered, and return them to the community. The vouchers are provided to the County by the Animal Mission.

Mr. Livingston inquired if there were any changes to the policies related to spaying and neutering.

Ms. Haynes replied that there were no changes to the policy.

Mr. Walker inquired why this item was before the Administration and Finance Committee. Assistant to the County Administrator, Ashiya Myers, replied, per Council Rules, if it involves an ordinance, it comes before the Administration and Finance Committee.

Ms. Newton inquired why the two-hour time was selected regarding tethering.

Ms. Haynes replied that in order to enforce the policy, they have to be able to see the length of time the animal is tethered, and two hours is a reasonable amount of time for us to enforce.

Ms. Newton stated she imagines that adding tethering ensures the animal is cared for and not tethered indefinitely. At the same time, if a responsible pet owner is tethering the pet, she would assume they are tethering it for safety reasons. She thinks we are doing the two hours for our convenience but not necessarily considering situations that a responsible pet owner might face; therefore, she has some concerns about this.

Mr. Weaver moved to forward to Council with a recommendation to approve the proposed revisions to Chapter 5, Animals and Fowl, of the County Code of Ordinances, seconded by Mr. Livingston.

In Favor: Pugh, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker

Opposed: McBride

The vote was in favor.

- b. Community Planning & Development – Building Inspections Division – Town of Eastover Intergovernmental Agreement – The Building Official, Michael Zaprzalka, indicated that Eastover Mayor Robinson approached us to reinstate and/or redevelop a new intergovernmental agreement (IGA) for the Building Department. The town is unable to have a building official, which, by law, you have to have to conduct construction activities. The IGA would allow the County to pick up the plan review, permitting, and inspection processes. He noted the County had an IGA with Eastover in the past, and there is very little activity. The zoning portion will still fall upon the town. After discussions with Assistant County Administrator Aric Jensen and Mayor Robinson, it was thought best for the IGA to be for infinity or until such time as either of the jurisdictions no longer wants to participate. The IGA can be terminated by either party with six months' notice.

Mr. Branham inquired if the fee schedule on p. 65 of the agenda packet is the schedule for inspection services.

Mr. Zaprzalka replied that as a part of the IGA, the town is adopting the county's fee schedule, which will be updated if the county's fee schedule changes.

Mr. Livingston moved to forward to Council with a recommendation to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the Town of Eastover and Richland County. Richland County recognizes the mutual benefit derived from the Town of Eastover contracting with Richland County to provide essential code inspections and plan review services to the citizens. The agreement strictly provides building code inspections and plan reviews of all residential and commercial buildings for renovations, repairs, additions, and new construction within the Town of Eastover's jurisdictional limits. Richland County will provide these services through the Building Inspections Division of the Community Planning and Development Department, it was seconded by Mr. Pugh.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- c. Community Planning & Development – Conservation – Cemetery Protection Ordinance – Community Planning & Development Division Manager Quinton Epps declared they recently became aware of gravesites in the county that were being destroyed. The Conservation Commission recommends the adoption of the proposed ordinance so we can increase the penalties and do a better job of protecting the gravesites in the county.

Mr. Branham noted the last sentence of Section I (D) states: "No further ground-disturbing activities shall commence until authorization to proceed is issued by the State and County in accordance with state law." He asked if we should state what would trigger the County to authorize the proceeding.

Mr. Epps replied it has always been at the discretion of staff to authorize when to proceed.

Mr. Branham inquired if we are sure the state would be willing to issue something that authorizes proceeding.

Mr. Epps responded that there are state penalties; however, the county is often more present, which is why we want to establish county penalties. Once the county gets involved, then we get the state involved. The Archives and History Department will come over and identify the type of burial site it is.

Mr. Branham requested these matters be further contemplated as we move this up to the Council level.

The County Attorney, Patrick Wright, maintained that the state is the expert in making the determination as to what it is. The county and state will work together because it is the state's duty to make the determination.

Mr. Branham noted he would work with staff to suggest amendments to the proposed ordinances.

Ms. McBride moved to forward to Council with a recommendation to approve the proposed ordinance to better protect graves, graveyards, tombs, mausoleums, Native American burial grounds or burial grounds, and other repositories of human remains in Richland County, seconded by Mr. Weaver.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- d. Utilities – Greenlake Gravity Sewer Rehabilitation – Mr. Bill Davis, Utilities Director, stated this is a 75% CDBG grant, which continues the trend we have had in Utilities. He noted we are approaching \$13M in grant funds. Grant

funding keeps the rates down. Utilities found a low-to-moderate income (LMI) neighborhood where we could make a difference in an older system. The pipes are approximately 50 years old and are beginning to deteriorate. They will identify the deteriorating pipes and replace them with this project, which will add an additional 50 years. He indicated there will be a 300% savings with this type of technology. In addition, there will be significant cost savings because the pump station runs about 60% longer when it rains. This means the pipes are receiving rainwater, which is not what they are designed for, reducing the capacity, increasing the run time, and causing potential problems in the future.

Ms. McBride moved to forward to Council with a recommendation to award the rehabilitation phase to Vortex Companies, seconded by Mr. Livingston.

Ms. Newton applauded the staff for the way they handled this grant.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- e. Department of Public Works – Engineering – Springwood Lakes High Hazard Potential Dam Rehabilitation – Mr. Wright expressed that this item will need to be taken up in Executive Session.

Mr. Pugh moved to go into Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Weaver.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

***The Committee went into Executive Session at approximately 6:29 PM
and came out at approximately 6:53 PM***

Mr. Pugh moved to come out of Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Weaver.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

Mr. Walker indicated no action was taken in Executive Session.

Ms. Shirani Fuller, County Engineer, stated this item relates to the Springwood Lakes community. There are three small ponds that are spring-fed and lead to a larger body of water referred to as Springwood Lake, which is a high-hazard dam. The dam suffered damages in 2015; therefore, it no longer impounds water at the capacity it once did. High hazard itself is a category associated with FEMA. If the dam breaches, it will likely cause severe property damage and loss of life. The grant is the 2nd grant the County has accepted related to this community. The request is for pre-approval of the engineering services currently out for bid. The need for the pre-approval is to meet the deadlines and timeline for the grant. FEMA has made it clear there will be no extensions. If the deadlines are not met, we would be obligated to repay the money.

Mr. Walker inquired if the dollars had been utilized from the 1st grant. If so, what were they used for?

Ms. Fuller responded the total grant was \$500,000. Approximately \$200,000 was utilized for design services. Another \$200,00 is being used as the matching grant for the grant we are discussing, which leaves us a balance of \$100,000.

Ms. McBride moved to forward to Council with a recommendation to approve the design services for the Springwood Lake high hazard dam rehabilitation, seconded by Mr. Weaver.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

5. **ADIOURNMENT** – Mr. Weaver moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Walker.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, Weaver, and Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:57 PM.