

GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

April 11, 2022

5:01 p.m.

County Square – Conference Room D

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.

Committee Members Present:

Dan Tripp, *Chairman*
Liz Seman, *Vice-Chairman*
Ennis Fant
Willis Meadows
Stan Tzouvelekas

Committee Members Absent:

None

Others Present:

Lynn Ballard, *Council District 26*
John Hansley, *Deputy County Administrator*
Mark Tollison, *County Attorney*
Jessica Stone, *Deputy Clerk to Council*
Richard Few, *Attorney*
Jim Burns, *Chief Operations Officer at Hartness Development*
Fred Dilworth, *Project Coordinator at Hartness*

Call to Order:

Chairman Tripp

Invocation:

Councilor Tzouvelekas

Item (3)

Approval of Minutes

a. March 28, 2022 – Regular Committee Meeting

Action: Councilor Meadows moved to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2022, Regular Committee on Finance meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item (4)

Boards and Commissions – Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee (3 vacancies)

Councilor Meadows stated he was concerned as one of the applicants had not fully completed the board and commission application.

Councilor Tzouvelekas stated as there were three (3) vacancies and only two (2) applicants, he questioned moving forward.

Chairman Tripp stated applicants were normally elected by acclamation if there were fewer applicants than vacancies.

Vice-Chairman Seman stated there was no problem unless there was a quorum issue.

Chairman Tripp asked if the Finance Committee was up against a deadline in regards to the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee.

Mr. Hansley stated the vacancy would not create a quorum issue, there would simply be no representation from the hotel industry. The Accommodations Tax Advisory required three (3) members from the hotel industry, two (2) from large hotels and one (1) from a small hotel. Mr. Hansley stated he was aware one of the applicants failed to complete the application.

Vice-Chairman Seman stated failure to fully complete the board and commission application was not necessarily unusual.

Chairman Tripp asked if it would be unusual for someone, on behalf of the committee, to reach out to the applicant to discuss their application.

Vice-Chairman Seman moved to hold the item until the candidate in question, Mr. Crowne, could be contacted to fully complete the application.

Motion to hold carried unanimously.

Item (5) Abandoned Textile Mill Site Certification – 701 Poinsett Highway, Greenville

A resolution to provide certification pursuant to the South Carolina Textile Communities Revitalization Act (S.C. Code Section 12-65-10 et. seq.) for certain property located at 701 Poinsett Highway and being contiguous to the former Piedmont Shirt Factory in Greenville, South Carolina.

Attorney Richard Few, Jim Burns and Fred Dilworth were available to answer questions regarding the item.

Mr. Burns stated the site was the former Hartness Pepsi Bottling Plant. The proposed entrepreneurship district consisted of both buildings; the piece of the project incorporating the Piedmont Shirt Factory was already moving forward.

Action: Councilor Meadows moved approval of the resolution.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item (6) Abandoned Textile Mill Site Certification – 301 Arcadia Drive, Greenville

A resolution to provide certification pursuant to the South Carolina Textile Communities Revitalization Act (S.C. Code Section 12-65-10 et. seq.) for certain property located at 304 Arcadia Drive in Greenville, South Carolina.

Attorney Richard Few and John Parker (North Main Exchange) were available to answer questions regarding the item.

Mr. Few stated the property would be redeveloped and used for textile purposes again in the future.

Councilor Tzouvelekas asked if both properties, 701 Poinsett Highway and 301 Arcadia Drive, met all the certification requirements as abandoned textiles mill sites.

Mr. Few stated both sites had been vetted properly and met all certification requirements.

Action: Councilor Meadows moved approval of the resolution.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item (7)

FY23 Greenville County Library System Budget

An ordinance to approve the appropriation of funds for the Greenville County Library System for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023; and to authorize the annual ad valorem property tax millage levy for library purposes.

Beverly James (Executive Director, Greenville County Library System) and Don Allen (Accounting Manager, Greenville County Library System) were available to answer questions regarding the item.

Ms. James provided an update on the library system. She touched on reservations for meeting spaces, virtual programming and in-person programming, and the fact that the number of physical items checked out had risen. If that trend continued, the number of items checks out would exceed last year's total by 32%. Last year, Greenville County Library System cardholders downloaded or streamed a total of 829,431 digital items.

Councilor Seman requested the system's current fund balance. She asked if there was anything "interesting" happening from a capital outlay standpoint.

Mr. Allen stated the Greenville County Library System's current undesignated fund balance was approximately \$15,100,000. The system recently purchased property in the Blue Ridge area with plans to build a branch on the site. Plans were also underway to renovate one of the existing branches. There was no anticipated timeline for either project.

Councilor Tzouvelekas asked if any part of the library system currently closed.

Ms. James stated she was not aware of any part of the library system that was currently closed. She stated all locations were open as well as the bookmobile. Homebound services were still in the process of becoming fully operational.

Councilor Tzouvelekas inquired about the number of branch locations.

Ms. James stated there were currently 12 locations throughout Greenville County.

Councilor Tzouvelekas inquired about the number of employees within the library system.

Mr. Allen stated there were approximately 270 employees, representing a combination of full-time and part-time staff members.

Councilor Tzouvelekas stated \$15 million for salaries and benefits appeared to be a lot of money in relation to the number of employees.

Ms. James stated ten of the system's branches were open six (6) days a week from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. The Five Forks Branch and the Main Library were open on Sundays from 2:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Greenville County Library System had lower staffing levels than Charleston County and Richland County.

Councilor Tzouvelekas asked how Greenville County's budget compared with those counties.

Ms. James stated it was lower.

Councilor Tzouvelekas asked if there were any projects that could improve the library system.

Ms. James stated the boiler was recently replaced at the Main Library and they were in the process of replacing materials. They were on "top of" any deferred maintenance issues.

Councilor Tzouvelekas asked who saw the “expanded version” of the budget.

Ms. James stated the library board would see it.

Councilor Tzouvelekas asked if any of “our team” would see the complete budget.

Mr. Hansley state, by statute, the Library Board was given the authority to govern and run the business of financing of the library system. County Administration reviewed the information provided by the library system.

Mr. Allen stated the library system received state funding for materials. In order to receive those funds, they had to meet certain guidelines. One of the guidelines was personnel costs; it had to be within 65-70% of the total budget. Greenville County Library System was at the low end of that guideline. Information Resources was another 15-20% with approximately 10% remaining for other expenses. The budget had to be presented to the State Library before funds were disbursed.

Councilor Meadows asked about the system’s millage.

Mr. Hansley stated due to reassessment, the library system’s millage was reduced from 8.5 to 8; however, the revenues remained the same.

Mr. Allen stated the library system last requested a millage increase in 2008.

Chairman Tripp asked how the system’s fund balance was set.

Ms. James stated the system followed the County’s recommendations of 25-35%.

Action: Councilor Seman moved approval of the ordinance.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item (8) **Adjournment**

Action: Councilor Meadows moved to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously the meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Jessica M. Stone
Deputy Clerk to Council