

MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2024
REGULAR MEETING
6:00 P.M.

Colleton County Council
Council Chambers, Old Jail Building
109 Benson Street
Walterboro, SC 29488

Present: Chairman Steven D. Murdaugh called the meeting to order with Council Members Dr. Joseph Flowers, Phillip Taylor, Bubba Trippe, and Scott Biering in attendance.

Others Included: Kevin Griffin, Meagan Utsey, Sean Thornton, Jon Carpenter, Barry McRoy, Laura Clark, Sue Keith, Janet Smith, Mayor Crawford Moore, Mayor Donald Dulin, Jessica Williams, Sharon Witkin, Johnny Frank, Scott Catterton, Wesley McDonald, Lynn Stroble, Clarence Wiggins, Felicia Johnson, Scott Karai, and Greg Googer.

Councilman Phillip Taylor gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

- A. Special Meeting May 3, 2024— Councilman Taylor moved to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on May 3, 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering and the motion carried unanimously.
- B. Regular Meeting May 7, 2024 — Dr. Flowers moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on May 7, 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilman Trippe and the motion carried unanimously.
- C. Special Meeting May 9, 2024— Councilman Taylor moved to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on May 9, 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering and the motion carried unanimously.
- D. Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting June 6, 2024— Councilman Taylor moved to approve the minutes of the Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting held on June 6, 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering and the motion carried unanimously.

Awards and Recognitions

- A. Proclaiming – Chief Apostle Jeanette Manigo Hall

A motion to approve the Proclamation was made by Councilman Taylor and seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Taylor: Stated, I cannot let this go without saying how my life has been enriched. I have been interacting with Chief Apostle Hall for about 40 years. I was a young child, and she was

a minister with the late Pastor Christina Bing. I have seen this work she is doing in the county and abroad. I would like to congratulate her again with this Proclamation and say thank you.

- B. Proclaiming the Week of July 27 – August 4, 2024, as Gullah-Geechee Nation Appreciation Week

A motion to approve the Proclamation was made by Councilman Taylor and seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion carried unanimously.

- C. Proclaiming June 2024 as The Joy of Fatherhood Month in Colleton County

A motion to approve the Proclamation was made by Councilman Taylor and seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion carried unanimously.

***Chairman Murdaugh read the Proclamations into the record.

Appearances & Public Presentations

- A. Community Innovations Colleton Voice – Shiela Keaise Executive Director & Founder, and Braxton Vaughn, 2024 Mr. Colleton Voice

Ms. Eppler: Stated, I wanted to give you a brief rundown of how we got connected. Most of you know me as I have been a local business owner for 36 years. Shiela and I have known each other for 20+ years. It just so happened at the end of 2022 I was getting involved in something just as Shiela was getting ready to retire from 28 years as the Colleton County Librarian. It was a divine connection, and we brought a parenting program entitled “Raising Highly Capable Kids” to South Carolina. It is a 13-week evidence-based program. We were the first to bring it to South Carolina. We have a partnership with the Colleton County School District and DSS has been with us from the beginning. They have referred to us some of our students. That is just one of four pillars community innovations encompasses. I would like to introduce to you Shiela Keaise the Executive Director and Founder of Community Innovations. We have with us the winner of Colleton Voice in his age group, Mr. Braxton Vaughn. He will be performing a song for you all, supported by his mother and grandmother.

Ms. Keaise: Stated, thank you Councilmen for allowing us to come and share. Julie has given the foundation, and quite well. We wanted to tell you exactly what we are doing in Colleton County and why. We would love your support in any way that you can to make us more visible and to help us continue our work. You will see all the things that we are doing. We have decided to give you all a description, impact, the pillars Julie was talking about, and what it costs. We have funded Community Innovations with volunteerism, grants, donations, and free love from the community. Believe it or not, these programs were done with all the above that we have talked about. No one has been compensated for our services. So, we wanted to bring it to the forefront. We want Colleton County to benefit from the things that I have envisioned for our community innovations. Not all of our programs are for children. Some are for teens, children, and adults. These programs are designed to provide an outlet for children, teens, and adults to grow, meet, interact, and play through the four pillars of health, mentoring, education, and parenting. I will not go into all the

details, but for the benefit of our public we have seven active programs. The Young Authors Program, which we provide one on one consulting on the proper etiquette of writing, a picture book of the idea to the publication. Our Family Fun Zone, we partnered with the Rice Festival to provide a fun element to the community where children, adults, and families come together to play games, win prizes, and learn new things. We had Christmas with seniors, where we provided fun musical and interactive sessions with seniors. Last year, we visited three senior centers and provided gift cards. This year we would like to do something a little different. We want to build on their health and wellness where we will sing and do story telling that will allow them to share their favorite Christmas memories. Then we have "Raising Highly Capable Kids". I would love for Julie to speak about that. This is where Julie brought me on board and is our very first Community Innovations program that we sponsored.

Ms. Epple: Stated, I do not want to take up too much of your time, but it is an excellent program. We reach out to single parents, mother and father, and even grandmothers have attended. We all know that there is a need for strengthening the family unit. We are currently wrapping up another session, and there are a couple of graduation bulletins from our first graduation. What we leave here is free for you all to take. We are already making plans for another session in the fall. As I mentioned earlier, we have the backing of the school district, DSS, and many local churches.

Ms. Keaise: Stated, thank you, Julie. Then we have Literary Tea with local authors. This is where we bring in local authors in formal settings that requires a hat and gloves for woman, a jacket for men, and dress cute attire for children. Where we inspire and encourage them for literary book signing, hors d'oeuvres, and a variety of teas. We also have a writing contest. Then there is story telling with Ms. Literacy, where we provide fun, informative, and creative stories. We teach literacy and build a love for reading. We are partnered with Colleton County School District in that effort. Also, we have mentoring where we offer one on one mentoring, distance mentoring, group mentoring, which includes motivational speaking. The final program we have done and will be doing this coming year is Colleton Voice. We provide a mentoring program where gifted children can sing and share their talents. We encourage them to build on that talent. Before we have Braxton come up to sing, he won for his age group this year. This is his second time competing. Last year he came in third place. This is a testament that if you don't succeed try, try, again. You will see on the handouts some partial and full funding. Those are things we would like you to consider as you do your budgeting. If you have some encouraging words and ideas, we will take those as well. We will continue to do the programs and things to make our community a better place. We appreciate your time. We would like to present to you the Colleton County Voice 2024 winner, Braxton Vaughn. He will be around the community a lot and will sing at several locations.

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, Braxton, that was very good. You're on your way to American Idol. It was priceless watching you, but it was really priceless watching your mom and grandmother's faces. Thank you for coming here and doing that. It takes a lot of courage, but it did not look like you were nervous at all.

Councilman Taylor: Stated, I just want to hear the administrator follow that.

Councilman Biering: Stated, Braxton, you did very good. You have a lot to be proud of getting up here and doing that and putting the effort in to come back again a second year, that is a big

accomplishment. I would like to recognize that all the Proclamations tonight have one theme, pouring into children. Thank you for what you do each and every one of you. Also, the culture. That all goes hand in hand, thank you for doing what you do. It is my pleasure to honor you all.

Councilman Trippe: Stated, Braxton, you did great, and you had Barry in the back moving.

Administrator's Briefing

Mr. Griffin: Stated, Braxton, that was fantastic. I wanted to remind everyone that we have one meeting for July and August due to the Association of Counties Meeting. This year that meeting will be on July 23, 2024, at 6pm in the Council Chambers. We have three different borrowing items on the agenda tonight. First, is a bond anticipation note. That is to assist with the Voter's Registration Office, Coroner's Office, the upfit at the jail, and a few other various small items. Second, we do a lease purchase for heavy equipment every three years. It just ran out of its third year, and we are renewing that. The third is something that we have not done before. It is an RDA loan for the airport. We will be the borrower from the USDA. It will be for two t-hangars and a fuel farm. They will pay the note back with the revenue from the t-hangars. I did want to make you aware that it will go against our GO capacity.

Councilman Taylor: Stated, they said it would not go against our GO.

Mr. Griffin: Stated, Jon did some research and we just found out late this week.

Councilman Taylor: Stated, we were told it would be revenue neutral.

Mr. Griffin: Stated, we can get it in full faith and credit with the county behind it. There was one other item I had a couple questions about, the Freedom Field and pickle ball courts. We got an earmark about 3 years ago. Freedom Field is an ADA accessible baseball and basketball court for disabled children and adults. We are finally getting around to that project. Layered on with that is a PARD grant. Mrs. Carmichael has talked with some of you all. She went to the recreation commission, and they agreed to look into a PARD grant to put pickle ball courts in. I did not know this, but pickle ball has outgrown tennis as a recreation. Currently, she has a group of 40-50 seniors right now. We have one field, but it is at capacity. There is one over in Forest Hills, but they do tennis practices there and often get run off from pickle ball. I just wanted to explain that to you all.

Councilman Taylor moved to open executive session. Councilman Biering seconded that motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing

- A. Ordinance 24-O-03, To Provide for the Issuance and Sale of Not to Exceed \$10,000,000 General Obligation Bonds and Not to Exceed \$10,000,000 General Obligation Bond Anticipation Notes of Colleton County, South Carolina for the Purposes of Defraying the Costs of Acquisition, Improvement, Construction, Installation, Equipping, and Renovation of the Project Described Herein, and Other County Government Facilities;**

To Provide for the Payment Thereof; To Declare the County Council’s Intent to Reimburse Expenditures for Some or All Such Costs from the Proceeds of Tax-Exempt Bonds or Notes; And Other Matters Relating Thereto

B. Ordinance 24-O-04, Authorizing the Acquisition of Certain Equipment and Heavy Vehicles by Colleton County, South Carolina by Lease-Purchase Financing in the Amount of Not Exceeding \$3,000,000; The Execution and Delivery of Certain Instruments, including a Lease-Purchase Agreement by Colleton County; And Other Matters Relating Thereto

C. Ordinance 24-O-06, To Provide for the Levy of Taxes in Colleton County, South Carolina, for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025 to Provide for All Other Appropriations Thereof; and to Provide for Other Matters Related Thereto

Councilman Taylor made a motion to close Public Hearing. Councilman Trippe seconded that motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

A. 3rd Reading Ordinance 24-O-03, To Provide for the Issuance and Sale of Not to Exceed \$10,000,000 General Obligation Bonds and Not to Exceed \$10,000,000 General Obligation Bond Anticipation Notes of Colleton County, South Carolina for the Purposes of Defraying the Costs of Acquisition, Improvement, Construction, Installation, Equipping, and Renovation of the Project Described Herein, and Other County Government Facilities; To Provide for the Payment Thereof; To Declare the County Council’s Intent to Reimburse Expenditures for Some or All Such Costs from the Proceeds of Tax-Exempt Bonds or Notes; And Other Matters Relating Thereto

Councilman Trippe moved to approve 3rd Reading Ordinance 24-O-03, To Provide for the Issuance and Sale of Not to Exceed \$10,000,000 General Obligation Bonds and Not to Exceed \$10,000,000 General Obligation Bond Anticipation Notes of Colleton County, South Carolina for the Purposes of Defraying the Costs of Acquisition, Improvement, Construction, Installation, Equipping, and Renovation of the Project Described Herein, and Other County Government Facilities; To Provide for the Payment Thereof; To Declare the County Council’s Intent to Reimburse Expenditures for Some or All Such Costs from the Proceeds of Tax-Exempt Bonds or Notes; And Other Matters Relating Thereto. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion carried unanimously.

B. 3rd Reading Ordinance 24-R-04, Authorizing the Acquisition of Certain Equipment and Heavy Vehicles by Colleton County, South Carolina by Lease-Purchase Financing in the Amount of Not Exceeding \$3,000,000; The Execution and Delivery of Certain Instruments, including a Lease-Purchase Agreement by Colleton County; And Other Matters Relating Thereto

Councilman Taylor moved to approve 3rd Reading Ordinance 24-R-04, Authorizing the Acquisition of Certain Equipment and Heavy Vehicles by Colleton County, South Carolina by Lease-Purchase Financing in the Amount of Not Exceeding \$3,000,000; The Execution and Delivery of Certain Instruments, including a Lease-Purchase Agreement by Colleton County; And Other Matters Relating Thereto. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion carried unanimously.

C. 3rd Reading Ordinance 24-R-06, To Provide for the Levy of Taxes in Colleton County, South Carolina, for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 to Provide for All Other Appropriations Thereof; and to Provide for Other Matters Related Thereto

Councilman Trippe moved to approve 3rd Reading Ordinance 24-R-06, To Provide for the Levy of Taxes in Colleton County, South Carolina, for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 to Provide for All Other Appropriations Thereof; and to Provide for Other Matters Related Thereto. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion carried unanimously.

D. 2nd Reading, Ordinance 24-O-07, Authorizing Pursuant to Title 12, Chapter 44 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, As Amended, the Execution and Delivery of a Fee-in-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Agreement, by and between Colleton County, South Carolina and a Company known to the County as Project Bobcat, as Sponsor, to Provide for a Fee-in-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Incentive and Certain Special Source Revenue Credits; to Further Amend the Multi-County Industrial/Business Park Agreement between Colleton County, South Carolina and Hampton County, South Carolina, Providing for the Development of a Jointly Owned and Operated Industrial/Business Park, so as to Include Property in Colleton County as Part of the Park; and Other Related Matters

Councilman Trippe moved to approve 3rd Reading Ordinance 24-O-07, Authorizing Pursuant to Title 12, Chapter 44 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, As Amended, the Execution and Delivery of a Fee-in-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Agreement, by and between Colleton County, South Carolina and a Company known to the County as Project Bobcat, as Sponsor, to Provide for a Fee-in-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Incentive and Certain Special Source Revenue Credits; to Further Amend the Multi-County Industrial/Business Park Agreement between Colleton County, South Carolina and Hampton County, South Carolina, Providing for the Development of a Jointly Owned and Operated Industrial/Business Park, so as to Include Property in Colleton County as Part of the Park; and Other Related Matters The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Flowers: Asked, where is this park going to be located?

Mr. Griffin: Stated, between exit 42 and the rest area, back off the highway on the Northbound side.

E. 2nd Reading Ordinance 24-O-08, Authorizing the County to Borrow \$2,300,000 on Behalf of the Lowcountry Regional Airport Through the USDA Rural Development Loan Program for the Construction of a New Fuel Farm and Two T-Hanger Units at the Lowcountry Regional Airport

Dr., Flowers moved to approve 2nd Reading Ordinance 24-O-08, Authorizing the County to Borrow \$2,300,000 on Behalf of the Lowcountry Regional Airport Through the USDA Rural Development Loan Program for the Construction of a New Fuel Farm and Two T-Hanger Units at the Lowcountry Regional Airport. The motion was seconded by Councilman Trippe. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Biering: Stated, do we have any proposed time on paying this note back?

Mr. Griffin: Stated, the term of the loan is a 30 year pay back.

New Business

A. 1st Reading, Ordinance 24-O-09, By Title Only, To Amend Ordinance 93-O-29 to Change the Name of the Colleton County Board of Disabilities and Special Needs to Colleton Cares

Councilman Taylor moved to approve 1st Reading, Ordinance 24-O-09, By Title Only, To Amend Ordinance 93-O-29 to Change the Name of the Colleton County Board of Disabilities and Special Needs to Colleton Cares. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Taylor: Stated, I was at the annual meeting when they announced wanting to change the name. They recognized Happy McLeod. The history of the Board of Disabilities of South Carolina, and the work that Happy McLeod did for this state and this nation. I believe we need to recognize her for what she has done. This board is really the fruit of a lot of the labor that she put in using her personal care and her time traveling this nation.

B. 1st Reading Ordinance 24-O-10, By Title Only, Authorizing Pursuant to Title 12, Chapter 44 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, As Amended, (1) The Execution and Delivery of a Fee-In-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Agreement, By and Between Colleton County, South Carolina and a Company Known to the County As Project Sun, as Sponsor, to Provide for a Fee-In-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Incentive and Certain Special Source Revenue Credits; (2) The Enlargement of the Boundaries of a Multi-County Industrial or Business Park Previously Created by Colleton County and Hampton County to Include Certain Property Located in Colleton County, South Carolina Now or to be Hereafter Owned and/or Operated by Project Sun, or One or More Companies Related Thereto; And (3) Other Related Matters

Dr. Flowers moved to approve 1st Reading Ordinance 24-O-10, By Title Only, Authorizing Pursuant to Title 12, Chapter 44 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, As Amended, (1) The Execution and Delivery of a Fee-In-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Agreement, By and Between Colleton County, South Carolina and a Company Known to the County As Project Sun, as Sponsor, to Provide for a Fee-In-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Incentive and Certain Special Source Revenue Credits; (2) The Enlargement of the Boundaries of a Multi-County Industrial or Business Park Previously Created by Colleton County and Hampton County to Include Certain Property Located in Colleton County, South Carolina Now or to be Hereafter Owned and/or Operated by Project Sun, or One or More Companies Related Thereto; And (3) Other Related Matters. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Flowers made a motion to move into discussion. Councilman Taylor seconded the motion.

Dr. Flowers: Asked, where is this one going to be?

Mr. Griffin: Stated, if you travel down I-95 northbound and take exit 68 at Hwy 61, it is about 1-2 miles past Scott Crosby's place on the right.

Dr. Flowers: Asked, did we negotiate the fee?

Mr. Griffin: Stated, the first one is a \$500,000 fee. This one is not as big, it is about 80 million dollars so the fee with this one is not as big at around \$300,000.

The motion carried unanimously.

C. Resolution 24-R-24-R-38, To Amend the Colleton County Record of Roads to Include Champion Lane

Dr. Flowers moved to approve Resolution 24-R-24-R-38, To Amend the Colleton County Record of Roads to Include Champion Lane. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Resolution 24-R-39, To Reschedule the July County Council Meeting and Cancel the August County Council Meeting

Councilman Biering moved to approve Resolution 24-R-39, To Reschedule the July County Council Meeting and Cancel the August County Council Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Trippe and the motion was carried unanimously.

E. Resolution 24-R-40, Committing to Negotiate a Fee-in-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Agreement Between Colleton County and Project Sun; Identifying the Project; and Other Matters Related Thereto

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 24-R-40, Committing to Negotiate a Fee-in-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Agreement Between Colleton County and Project Sun; Identifying the Project; and Other Matters Related Thereto. The motion was seconded by Councilman Trippe and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Resolution 24-R-41, To Authorize Acceptance and Budgeting of a PARD Grant for FY 2023-2024 and to Approve the Local Match

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 24-R-41, To Authorize Acceptance and Budgeting of a PARD Grant for FY 2023-2024 and to Approve the Local Match. The motion was seconded by Dr. Flowers and the motion carried unanimously.

G. Resolution 24-R-42, To Award the Contract for Design Build Services for the Freedom Field and Pickleball Courts

Dr. Flowers moved to approve Resolution 24-R-42, To Award the Contract for Design Build Services for the Freedom Field and Pickleball Courts. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering and the motion carried unanimously.

H. Resolution 24-R-43, To Approve the Renewal of Various Service Contracts for Colleton County

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 24-R-43, To Approve the Renewal of Various Service Contracts for Colleton County. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering. The motion was carried unanimously.

I. Resolution 24-R-44, To Authorize the Council Clerk to Advertise for Board Vacancies

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 24-R-44, To Authorize the Council Clerk to Advertise for Board Vacancies. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering and the motion carried unanimously.

***Chairman Murdaugh read the vacancies aloud.

J. Resolution 24-R-45, To Appoint Members to Board Vacancies

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 24-R-45, To Appoint Members to Board Vacancies. Items 1 and 2 were approved by acclamation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering. Council submitted ballots for item 3- Planning Commission. Councilman Biering moved to accept the results. The motion was seconded by Dr. Flowers and the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments

Mrs. Sue Keith: Stated, On Tuesday, August 13th at 6pm located at the Colleton County Memorial Library there will be a Delegation Meeting. This is your opportunity to hear what activities occur during the Legislative year from our Representatives and Senators. There will also be an opportunity for you to voice your opinions and ask questions. The other part of business that day are board openings. The board of Voter's Registration and Elections, Forestry Board, Foster Care Review Board, and one seat available for the Board of Trustees for the Technical College of the Lowcountry. If you are interested in serving your county, please contact me at the Delegation office Monday-Thursday and I will be glad to give you an application. Thank you for your time.

Mrs. Lynn Stroble: Stated, I come before you tonight and thank you for the opportunity for public comment. I come on behalf of our Superintendent who is representing us at the annual conference for administrators for South Carolina. A council member asked that we provide a little more information to you all, after the last meeting. Mrs. Witkins will bring before you, as our board chair, a document that Superintendent Williams has prepared for you with her staff. It is a year-end review. We would like to provide each of you with this and would like to start a tradition with this. We have just finished graduation and the school year. We would like to thank Councilman Biering for asking us to bring this to you. We would like all our taxpayers to know that we are doing our best to fulfill our mission for Colleton County to prepare each child today for tomorrow. We would like to fulfill our mission to ensure our students are globally competitive for any career or college path they choose. Just to highlight the academic, and of course we cannot tell you everything. The academic year is over, and we would love to tell you everything our students have achieved. By state law we cannot give out that data. The state will actually provide that publicly in October. We do know in the Spring when we gave students the IReady assessment, it predicts that we had growth in our 3rd-8th grade. Specifically, we had an increase in English and Math. The graduation rate will be part of how we are measured, and we are so glad to report that we are back in the category of over 300 students' graduation. We were at 270 and are now over 300 students graduating. We will continue working on that and having a mentorship from the state department to help us with our graduation rate. So, as you can see, we have a class for 2024 to be thankful for. Please see our program if you would like to see individual highlights, if you weren't able to be there. We can provide these to you as well. The class of 2024 brought in 7 million dollars that included internal, institutional, scholarships, and state scholarships provided by the lottery. We had three students that received academic honors from the state, and we have not had that since 2018. We would like to talk about Salkehatchie and the partnership there. We had 15 students graduate with their high school diploma and their associates degree. One of those students had a dual associates degree. Salkehatchie is a great partner of ours, as you can see, we have our partners highlighted on the back. We are so thankful for our career and technology center. Mr. Kubik couldn't be here tonight, because he is preparing a trip to Romania. So, I asked him to give me some highlights for tonight. We had 134 students receive a CATE certificate, which means they completed a program in a career area. 10 Students received a double status CATE completer and will be able to show their employer or college this completion certificate. The nursing program with the CNA state tested kids, we had 100% passing rate providing 25 students a CNA license by graduation. We are really doing well with that program as you can see. We see great work placement with our welding students and Colleton Fire Rescue. Our health students do internships at the Veterans Victory House and the science students are helping at the animal shelter. We are so thankful that our students get these opportunities. You can see our early childhood students go to work at Black Street Elementary and North Side Elementary. We also are offering OSHA

through the PE classes. Also, First Aid comes through the health classes. So, we are trying to help kids graduate with some certifications. 12 of our graduating students are enlisted and joining our United States Services. Our NJROTC and recruiters that come in have 12 of our students signed up to protect our country. You can see our achievements as far as investing our money since we last saw you. We have begun to invest our money in the local government investment pool that is offered through the state treasurer. Our audit has been good for 17 years and we are proud to be a part of the state initiative to get our beginning teachers' salaries up to \$47,000. We are always trying to get grants, but we want to give you a snapshot of where we are with our finances. We do feel like the climate culture has improved this year in our schools. You can always see highlights of our band, chorus, arts, and athletics. Since we went to a zero tolerance with discipline at our schools, the fighting has reduced by 34%. We will continue to expect good behavior from our students. We wanted to let you know that lunch buddy has started back, and we have volunteers from businesses going in and working with our students during lunch. One of our teachers, Mr. William Smyly, was recognized by the state treasurer's office. He was chosen as a South Carolina Financial Literacy master teacher for the month of March. There are many more things that we could tell you, but if you look on the back, you will see all our sponsors. We were so happy to see Community Innovations here tonight. Councilman Taylor can tell you more about our partnership with the Technical College of the Lowcountry. We are happy to now have an office, in our district office, for the Technical College of the Lowcountry. So, we wanted to highlight how the Sheriff's Office works with us, not just with SRO, but Officer Valentine and I had over 50 students out at Bell's for the DARE program trying to help kids make good choices. As the largest employer in Colleton County, we thank you for your public service and support. We hope that you will find us good stewards and making the best use of the services you are able to provide us with. We thank you for your time tonight.

Mrs. Sharon Witkin: Stated, I want to thank you for hearing the Tuesday, May 7th presentation on the financial status of the Colleton County School District. We shared with council the new salary mandates that the SC Legislature mandated, which are only 75% funded in South Carolina. We shared our projected 2024 and 2025 deficits and asked the council to consider a mil increase for school district operations. A millage increase has not been considered or made since 2019. For reference, we know the current projected 2024-2025 budget was shared with the public Thursday, May 16th in the Press and Standard newspaper. The millage increase for school operations was identified as 0%. This is not about my kids or your kids. This is not about the kids of today or the kids of tomorrow. This is about all Colleton County Kids and the time is now. We need your help, and if you can please consider a millage increase this year for our school district operations. There are kids who need your help who cannot be here tonight. Thank you.

Council Time

Councilman Taylor: Stated, I would like to announce on June 24th I will be facilitating an expungement clinic at the Colleton Career Skills Center. It is a free clinic for those who may have dots on their records and need to get them expunged. There are flyers available, but I do not have any with me tonight. They can call me or can come to the council clerk, and she will have a copy of that made available. Also, I wanted to let you know that when we had that public health and safety meeting Weyerhaeuser requested that we abandon maintenance on Parkers Ferry Road, and they will take it on from there.

Chairman Murdaugh: Stated, I wanted to mention we received a letter from Edisto Beach that the Chief of Police sent to us recommending a lifesaving award for Firefighter/Paramedic Robert Jennings and Firefighter/EMT Tyler Allen. ***Letter read into record. I congratulate those individuals, let's give them a round of applause.

Councilman Taylor: Stated, Barry Mcroy and David Greene put together this Business Preparedness Workshop. It is such a good thing for during the time of emergencies. I will make this available. It will be held on June 27th and is sponsored by Colleton County Economic Alliance, CCSO, CCFR, Colleton County Chamber of Commerce, EIS IT Consulting, State Farm, and SC Department of Commerce. This is a lot of people coming together for this event. So, please take advantage of this.

Executive Session

Councilman Taylor moved to go into executive session to discuss the following: Real Estate – Discussion of road closures, School District Millage Request, and Personnel – Fire-Rescue. Councilman Trippe seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Councilman Taylor moved to exit executive session. Councilman Trippe seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Ordinance 24-O-11, By Title Only, To Provide for the Levy of Taxes in Colleton County, South Carolina, by Establishing the Colleton County School District Millage in the Amount of 118.92 for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 to Provide for All Other Appropriations Thereof; and to Provide for Other Matters Related Thereto.

Councilman Taylor moved to approve 1st Reading Ordinance 24-O-11, By Title Only, To Provide for the Levy of Taxes in Colleton County, South Carolina, by Establishing the Colleton County School District Millage in the Amount of 118.92 for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 to Provide for All Other Appropriations Thereof; and to Provide for Other Matters Related Thereto. The motion was seconded by Chairman Murdaugh.

Councilman Biering: Stated, this is first reading only, that way we will and are going to set up meetings between now and then to have discussions.

Councilman Trippe: Stated, I would like to echo what Scott said, this is first reading only, and we will have some discussions and go from there.

Dr. Flowers: Stated, when spending taxpayers' money, you want to ensure you are getting an adequate description of what this money will go to so that it is spent wisely. We have had a lot of problems over the past 7 years. Unless you can ensure that this money will go specifically to teachers and not into a general fund, I can't go along with it. We did this a number of years ago and asked them to specify that it will go to the teachers and into the classrooms and they didn't do it. This should go to enhance education not administration. That is my opinion.

The motion carried 3 approved and 2 opposed.

Adjournment

Councilman Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting, Councilman Trippe seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

This 27th day of August 2024.



Steven D. Murdaugh, Chairman

ATTEST:



Kaela Brinson, Clerk to Council