

BLYTHEWOOD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

THE MANOR

100 ALVINA HAGOOD CIRCLE

BLYTHEWOOD, SC 29016

MONDAY, AUGUST 22, 2022

6:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present

Eddie Baughman, Mayor Pro Tem
Sloan Griffin
Rich McKenrick
Donald Brock
Bryan Franklin, Mayor

Staff Present

Carroll Williamson, Town Admin
Ginny Dupont, Town Attorney
Onye Cosom, Marketing

Members Absent

None

Staff Absent

None

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Bryan Franklin at 6:08 PM.

A. ROLL CALL

All Councilmen were present.

B. NOTIFICATION AND POSTING OF THE MEETING AGENDA

Carroll Williamson confirmed the agenda was properly posted and the media notified.

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Councilman McKenrick made a motion to remove Item IV. E from the agenda. Councilman Baughman seconded. Ms. Dupont advised Council that to amend the agenda required a unanimous vote. **All in favor: 3-2. Because it was not unanimous, the motion failed.** Councilman Griffin made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Councilman Brock seconded. **All in favor: 4-1.**

D. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Brock led the Pledge of Allegiance.

E. INVOCATION

Councilman Brock gave the invocation.

F. COUNCIL MEMBERS' REMARKS

Councilman Baughman noted that the YouTube livestream was not working.

Councilman McKenrick thanked everyone for the thoughts and prayers for his family as he dealt with the recent death of his father. He congratulated the Blythewood Youth Baseball League for representing South Carolina and winning the Dixie Youth World Series. He attended a TPAC meeting for the transportation committee.

Councilman Griffin thanked everyone for being here and also congratulated the Blythewood Dixie Youth Baseball team on their World Series Win. Spoke about approved money from the COG for a feasibility study on connecting Blythewood Rd and Langford Rd, crossing the railroad tracks. He said Richland County should update us either quarterly or monthly from the TPAC committee. The new light at Blythewood and Syrup Mill Rd has been a success, he's heard nothing but good things so far.

Councilman Baughman also congratulated the baseball team on their World Series win and for attending the sendoff party at Town Hall. Also thanked the Purple Heart committee and the attendees at the Purple Heart Celebration, one of the individuals in attendance actually passed away three days after the event. Councilman Baughman thanked Julie and Town Hall for sending flowers to the family and how much it meant to them. Last, but not least, he wanted to invite all those to the VFW for live music and good times.

Councilman Brock welcomed back Councilman McKenrick and thanked Councilman Griffin for bringing his son to the Comic Con event.

G. MAYOR'S REMARKS

Mayor Franklin congratulated the Blythewood Dixie Youth World Series baseball team on their incredible accomplishment from those boys and coaches. The town will recognize them at the Oktoberfest and celebrate their great achievement. He is very proud of them and looks forward to recognizing them. He has placed calls to the Governor and State Senators to see if any of them can be in attendance and/or do a proclamation for the team. Mayor noted that this was the third time Blythewood has sent a team to the Dixie Youth World Series. Spoke about the food drive competition with Ridgeway, Onye Cosom came up with a great idea to help bring food to the Christian Assistance Bridge program. Ridgeway's Mayor is here in attendance today, Mayor Cookendorfer. Program will run all thru the month of September. Mayor Cookendorfer spoke briefly inviting everyone to visit Ridgeway. Town of Ridgeway is excited to participate and is really looking forward to the competition but more importantly, helping those in need.

H. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Nothing to report.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(TC Meeting 7-25-22, Special Call Joint Meeting with PC 8-1-22)

Councilman Griffin made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilman Baughman seconded.

All in favor: 5-0.

II. PUBLIC HEARING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 155.480 TOWN OF BLYTHEWOOD CODE OF ORDINANCES TO ADD A MINIMUM ACREAGE REQUIREMENT TO MAP AMENDMENT REQUESTS UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS

A. Opening Statement

Mayor Franklin gave the opening statement and Mr. Williamson elaborated on the amendment.

B. Public Comment

No public comments.

C. Close Hearing

Mayor Franklin closed the public hearing.

III. PRESENTATION

A. A Presentation and Report by Ms. Miriam Atria, President and CEO of Capital City Lake Murray Country, a Regional Tourism Organization

Ms. Miriam Atria appeared before Town Council to provide an update to the work they are doing to promote the Town using the 30% State Accommodations Tax funds. They have established with Blythewood staff what to promote through google search keywords: Doko Manor, weddings, golfing, rodeo, BBQ, parks, farmer's market, restaurants, hotels, and meat. Meat was the most popular keyword.

They contracted with Crenshaw Visions for a digital billboard on I-77.

Social media has promoted several Blythewood events, including Women's Golf and Movies in the Park.

A media writer for golf will be visiting Blythewood on September 27-28 to write a story on the golf courses in and around the Town. Ms. Atria invited any Councilmen to have dinner with the writer.

Four quarterly direct mail e-blasts planned to golfers. First one went out. 220 calls about coming to visit Blythewood to play golf in the fall in response to this effort.

A print ad for Blythewood will be included in the South Carolina Visitor's Guide.

Ms. Atria provided a breakdown of what has been spent so far and what will be spent in the next fiscal year.

She also showed where short-term rentals are being booked in the surrounding area of Blythewood.

She requested that the Town promote a fishing day for kids on October 16 at the Columbia Canal in conjunction with the World Bass Championships.

Councilman Brock requested a breakdown of how many bookings for golf at each course.

Councilman Brock asked if the short-term rentals were in the Town. Ms. Atria replied that they were mostly out of town.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

Citizens Testimony Regarding Action Items (As item is presented)

A. **Resolution 2022.003** Pledging to Practice and Promote Civility in the Town of Blythewood

Mayor Franklin stated that Civility was a theme from the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) annual conference and that the MASC has asked all cities and towns to adopt a resolution adopting a civility pledge of civility. Mayor Franklin read the resolution aloud. Then the entire Town Council read the Civility Pledge together. **Councilman Griffin made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022.003. Councilman Baughman seconded. All in favor: 5-0.**

B. **FIRST READING**

Ordinance 2022.012 An Ordinance Amending Section 155.480 Town of Blythewood Code of Ordinances to Add a Minimum Acreage Requirement to Map Amendment Requests under Certain Conditions

Town Administrator Williamson explained that Blythewood's Zoning Ordinance currently does not have a minimum acreage for map amendments or rezonings that are not extending a contiguous zoning district. Two acres is the common minimum in most municipalities, including many near Blythewood. Staff recommended this text amendment to the Planning Commission. On August 1, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of this text amendment to Council. Councilman Brock asked whether properties to be rezoned must be a minimum of 2 acres if they are not contiguous to the same zoning district as is being requested. Town Administrator Williamson responded affirmatively. **Councilman Baughman made a motion to approve the first reading. Councilman Griffin seconded. All in favor: 5-0.**

C. Discussion and Approval of the FY22 Hospitality Tax Final Report- South Carolina Diamond Invitational

Town Administrator Williamson stated that this was a 5 day baseball tournament hosted by Blythewood High School in April of this year. Approximately 500 people were in attendance. Just less than half of those had zip codes outside of Blythewood. Event was well advertised. The applicant provided all receipts and proofs of payment to reflect the proper use of the total amount of H Tax funds that were allocated by Council. Staff recommends that Council award the final 20%. Event organizer Les Penfield spoke and noted that visitors from 43 zip codes attended. Also, he stated the funds spent during this event greatly exceeded what the Town provided. Many college scouts attended. He also noted that the benefits from these funds are spread to a large number of people. Councilman Baughman stated what an excellent event this was and stated his appreciation to Coach Penfield. **Councilman Griffin made a motion to award South Carolina Diamond Invitational the final 20% of the approved allocation from FY22. Councilman Baughman seconded. All in favor: 5-0.**

D. Discussion and Approval of the FY22 Hospitality Tax Final Report- 2022 Ribfest

Town Administrator Williamson stated that this is a more organized and complete report for Council than was provided last month. The chamber has provided all receipts and proofs of payment to reflect the proper use of the total amount of H Tax funds that were allocated by Council. Staff recommends that Council award the final 20%. Councilman Griffin stated that he asked Ms. Dupont to review the proceedings of the July 25 Town Council meeting concerning this agenda item. Ms. Dupont stated that during the last meeting this matter received a motion and a second to be postponed, but it failed, so the matter was not postponed. There was no vote on whether the final 20% of the hospitality tax funds would be approved for this event. Since there was no vote to approve or disapprove, this matter is back on the agenda again to actually have a vote on the matter. Councilman Baughman stated that on the evening of July 25 he apologized to Mr. Phil Frye (event organizer), Buck Coggins (rodeo event organizer) and to Chris

White (Chamber employee) and wanted to make a public apology for the way that meeting went down and the way people were treated. Councilman McKenrick asked Ms. Dupont if in the process she just described, if prior to the vote being taken, additional information is requested, and the applicant states that the information could be forthcoming and the vote is taken, is the receipt of additional information a reason to bring a matter back to the agenda. Ms. Dupont replied that a matter can be renewed as long as the intent is to consider additional information, not to derail the democratic process. Councilman McKenrick asked if since the matter of the Blythewood Rodeo H Tax payment could be brought back to the Town's agenda if the event organizer provided Mr. Brock with the information he requested during the July 25 meeting. Ms. Dupont stated that if that information was germane to the decision, it could be renewed. Mr. Frye stated that he worked with staff to improve the report but the numbers did not change. Councilman Griffin stated his appreciation for Mr. Frye meeting with him to discuss this event. **Councilman Griffin made a motion to approve the final 20% allocation for this application. Councilman Baughman seconded.** During discussion of the matter, Councilman Brock expressed his dislike that this matter was on the agenda again. Councilman McKenrick requested that the Mayor call the question. **All in favor: 4-1.**

E. Discussion and Approval of the FY22 Hospitality Tax Final Report- Juneteenth Block Party

Town Administrator Williamson stated that for various reasons including timing and availability of entertainment, the applicant changed the event from a Juneteenth Gala at Doko Manor to a block party at the Blythewood rodeo field held on June 11. Almost 700 people attended, with approximately 12 coming from out of state and many from zip codes within 50 miles. Council awarded funding for the Juneteenth Gala out of cycle in April 2022 with a total of \$23,500. The applicant provided all receipts and proofs of payment to reflect the proper use of H Tax funds for the block party up to \$19,847.21. Based on this, staff recommends that Council award a final amount of \$1,047.21. The applicant Ms. Tina Torres is in attendance and my understanding is that she may have more HTax eligible receipts and proofs of payment to submit. Ms. Dupont corrected her earlier response about the requirements for removing an item from an agenda. She stated that to remove an item from the agenda, only a simple majority was required. She recommended to Council to move to reconsider its vote about whether to remove an item from the agenda. Councilman McKenrick explained that his reasoning for requesting to have this item removed from the agenda was because the event that was held was different from the application that was approved by Council when the funding was allocated. Councilman McKenrick asked that the matter be reconsidered, based on Ms. Dupont's recommendation. Councilman Brock replied that he didn't think Councilman McKenrick was on the prevailing side because the motion had failed. But Ms. Dupont stated that because she had erred in her initial response about this procedure, in fact Councilman McKenrick was on the prevailing side because the initial vote was 3-2 in favor of removing the item. Councilman Brock requested that Mayor Franklin ask each council member how they voted previously. Mayor Franklin said that if the recommendation is to reconsider the matter, Council should just hold the vote again. **Councilman McKenrick made a motion to remove Item IV. E from the agenda. Councilman Baughman seconded. Councilman Brock requested a roll call vote:**

Councilman Brock- No, Councilman Baughman- Yes, Councilman Griffin- No, Councilman McKenrick- Yes, Mayor Franklin- No. The motion failed.

Mayor Franklin welcomed the applicant Ms. Tina Torres to the podium. Councilman Griffin apologized to Ms. Tina Torres for the disrespect that came to her previously and now on behalf of those who wouldn't apologize. He stated that we need to practice the same amount of civility and respect to every applicant. Councilman Griffin said this was a great event that 3 councilmen attended. Councilman Brock asked Town Administrator Williamson if Council was voting on the entire 20% remaining or on the amount reflected in the staff recommendation. Williamson stated that was just the staff's recommendation. Councilman McKenrick asked Town Administrator

Williamson if the event fundamentally changes like this one did, what should be the action of the Town. Town Administrator Williamson stated that his perspective was to give the applicant some flexibility because it was a new event with a lot of entertainment bookings involved. Town Administrator Williamson stated that he asked Mayor Franklin for guidance on how to proceed and Mayor Franklin said to continue to support the event. Councilman McKenrick asked Ms. Dupont if Council should act in this case. Ms. Dupont said she was unfamiliar with the exact wording of the Hospitality Tax rules and declined to give a response until she had reviewed those guidelines. Councilman Griffin made a motion to approve the full final 20% allocated for this event. Mayor Franklin seconded the motion. Mayor Franklin requested a roll call vote: Councilman Brock- yes, Councilman Baughman- no, Councilman Griffin- yes, Councilman McKenrick- no, Mayor Franklin- yes. The motion is approved on a 3-2 vote.

F. Discussion and Approval of the Purchase and Installation of Security Gates for Doko Meadows Park

Town Administrator Williamson stated that Council requested a quote for adding automated security gates for McLean Road and Sandfield Road. Included in the packet is a quote to add a swing gate at Sandfield Road and a sliding gate at McLean Road from ELI Controls, who installed the Langford Road gate. The total cost is \$50,981.23 and, if Council approves, can be paid for from the portion of the \$250,000 state earmark that was originally designated to be a reimbursement for the gates and cameras that were already purchased. Councilman Brock asked Town Administrator Williamson if this amount of funds was allocated for gates in the state earmark. Williamson replied that a portion of those funds were budgeted to pay for the gates and cameras that had been purchased previously, but that he could amend the submitted budget for the state earmark to include these gates because this is essentially the same type of use of the funds. Councilman Baughman expressed his support for this purchase while recognizing the impact this could have on the security. Town Administrator Williamson stated that the gates would likely still remain closed except for certain events. Councilman McKenrick asked Town Administrator Williamson if this would overspend the \$250,000 state earmark. Town Administrator Williamson answered no because this was just amending the original request for these funds to spend the funds differently. Councilman McKenrick asked Town Administrator Williamson if these gates would be operating on the same system as the current automated gate at Langford Road. Town Administrator Williamson replied yes. Councilman Baughman made a motion to approve. Councilman McKenrick seconded. All in favor: 5-0.

V. **EXECUTIVE SESSION- Per SC Section 30-4-70**

- A. Receipt of legal advice subject to attorney-client privilege regarding claims and potential claims by and against the Town.

There were no items to discuss in Executive Session.

VI. **RECONVENE**

VII. **ITEMS REQUIRING A VOTE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

VIII. **OPEN CITIZENS COMMENTS**

IX. **ADJOURNMENT**

Councilman Griffin made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Brock seconded. All in favor: 5-0. The

meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Carroll Williamson, Town Administrator