Town of Branchville

Regular Council Meeting

Mayor Franklin Dickson Presiding

Monday July 10th, 2023

7:00 PM

The Regular Council Meeting for the Town of Branchville was held on Monday July 10th, 2023 at 7 PM at the Town Hall. A notice with the time, date and place of the meeting was posted on the exterior bulletin board of the Town Hall at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Mayor Dickson called the meeting to order. Council, along with all those present, stood for the

Pledge of Allegiance, followed by prayer.

Roll call indicated all were present except Councilman Banks and Councilman Jumper.

**Welcome of Guest:** Mayor Dickson welcomed those present.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Councilman Connelly to accept the June 12th 2023 minutes; Councilwoman Peeples seconded the motion, motion carried.

**Approval of Financial Report:** Councilman Connelly made the motion to approve the General Fund

Financial report; Mayor Pro Tem Oliver seconded the motion, motion carried. Councilman Connelly made a motion to accept the January 2023 Water & Sewer Financial report; motion carried by show of hands. Mayor Dickson made a motion to accept the Municipal Court Financial report; Councilman Connelly seconded the motion, motion carried.

**Council Reports:**

1. **City Hall/License/Insurance:** Councilman Baker reports there are a couple of places that still haven’t paid their business licenses, we will send out another letter with a time limit. Otherwise everything is good with Town Hall.
2. **Water/Sewer/Streets:** Councilman Connelly reports the leak by the funeral home was fixed, waiting for it to dry out some to fill the hole.
3. **Parks/Recreation:** Councilman Banks is absent, Mayor Dickson reports that the Little League tournament had a great crowd. They are winding down baseball and softball, taking applications for football.
4. **Projects/Events:** Councilwoman Peeples reports there will be a softball tournament September 15th-16th for Raylrode Daze.
5. **Buildings/Grounds:** Mayor Pro Tem Oliver reports the pans were replaced on the AC at Town Hall, AC’s were serviced at the Eatery and the Museum, and pans were also replaced at the Eatery as well. Picnic tables were replaced at Evans St Park. Have some options that need to be reviewed for a piece of playground equipment for Evans St Park. This was put towards Executive Session for next Council meeting. Need to replace the back door at the Community Center. Want to contact Home Depot for this. Need to place a sign in the Community Center telling renters to not mess with the air conditioner. Mayor Pro Tem Oliver suggested we get a wifi thermostat that could be controlled from town hall or via an app, Mayor Dickson suggested we get a lockable box to go over the thermostat.
6. **Police Department:** Councilman Jumper absent, Mayor Dickson says the only thing he was aware of was that there had been some bicycle thefts around town.

**Old Business:**  Palmetto Utilities Dispute update, Councilman Banks absent, Mayor Dickson asked to take this into Executive Session to discuss.

**New Business:** As part of the RIA grant to repair lines on Evans, Reeves Branch and Bridge St, the town has received a letter of commitment from RIA and a contract for grant management services with the Lower Savannah Council of Governments. We have worked with the COG on previous projects and they handled all of the administration of the grant. Councilman Connelly made the motion to sign the contract, Mayor Pro Tem Oliver seconded, motion carried.

**Agenda Items/ Public Comments:** Carrie Johnson, treasurer of the Raylrode Daze Committee, appeared before council to thank the Mayor, Councilman Jumper and Councilwoman Peeples for their help with the Raylrode Daze Golf Tournament. The tournament raised almost $5000 which will go towards bands, repairs and expenses. She will be leaving information for people to pick up to participate in RR Daze. Softball tournament will be September 16th, lots of interest in that, $200.00 per team with trophies and prizes, people from all over are interested. If anyone wants to help, please let her know. Open to anyone, co-ed, come and join. Mayor Dickson suggested that in addition to the $200 entry fee for the teams to add two softballs to keep expenses down. Kick off for Raylrode Daze is September 17th, Parade following Saturday.

Montez Haynes came before council to introduce himself along with his sons, Braxton and Bryson. Mr. Haynes is running for Orangeburg County Coroner in the 2024 Election. He is having a meet and greet on August 11th at the Cecil Museum in Orangeburg, all elected officials are invited. He has 20 years of funeral home experience, and currently works for Bamberg County as deputy coroner. Mayor Dickson invited him to come participate in Raylrode Daze as well.

**Items of Information:** The new streetlights Dominion have been installing look great, they are still installing the rest of them.

**Executive Session:** Mayor Dickson called the Council into executive session at 7:24pm to discuss Millage, Freight Depot Ditch, Business License Ordinance 1st read and Palmetto Utilities Dispute. A motion was made by Councilwoman Peeples to go into session; Councilman Connelly seconded the motion, motion carried.

Motion was made by Councilman Connelly at 7:51pm to return back to a regular council meeting. Councilwoman Peeples seconded the motion, motion carried.

The amendment to the business license ordinance is an update from the MASC to bring all business license ordinances in the state into compliance and reflect changes to the rate schedule across the board. Councilman Baker made a motion to accept the update to the business license ordinance and have the first reading; Councilman Connelly seconded the motion, motion carried.

Council discussed the millage rate reported to Orangeburg county and whether to increase it. It is based on property taxes. Councilman Connelly made a motion to leave the millage rate as is. Mayor Pro Tem Oliver seconded the motion, motion carried.

Mayor Dickson asked for a motion to support signing the Letter of Commitment to the RIA. Councilman Connelly made the motion to sign the contract, Mayor Pro Tem Oliver seconded, motion carried.

Mayor Dickson reported that he was going to have a meeting with Metts Engineering about the Palmetto Utilities dispute. Councilman Connelly and Mayor Pro Tem Oliver will also attend the meeting.

**Adjournment**: Motion was made by Councilman Connelly to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Peeples seconded the motion, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Clerk of Court

Emily Maynard