

Minutes

McClellanville Town Council

June 3, 2024 – 7:00 PM

McClellanville Town Council met on the above-noted date. Notice of the meeting was published in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act. Mayor Rutledge Leland presided. Council members Aaron Baldwin, Chris Bates, Bob Gannon and Jim Scott were present. Others present included: Michelle McClellan, Kathryn Basha, Sean Dove with Charleston County Floodplain Management, and members of the community.

Mayor Leland asked Council to review the May 6 minutes. Councilman Gannon made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scott and carried by a unanimous vote of Council.

There were no representatives present from the Charleston County Sheriff's Office or Awendaw-McClellanville Consolidated Fire District.

Sean Dove, Charleston County Floodplain Management Coordinator, addressed Council regarding issues that the Town has been having regarding historic homes in the floodplain. Councilman Scott said that Council was considering amending the ordinance because it was not very user friendly. Councilman Scott said residents want to restore homes to what they had previously and not have to comply with Class 4/5 materials.

Mr. Dove said that the County Ordinance had higher standards than FEMA in order to increase the County's Community Rating System (CRS) which lowers flood insurance premiums for residents. He said that the Town could change their requirements to meet minimum FEMA guidelines which were less stringent for prefirm homes (homes built before 1973). Mr. Dove stated that the Town could choose one of two options: The Town could redefine historic structures to include the NFIP definition of substantial improvement and include an exclusion for historic structures or provide relief to historic structures through a variance process. Mr. Dove said the Town could also decrease the five-year requirement for cumulative improvements, if desired.

Councilman Gannon asked if that would affect the Town's CRS Rating. Mr. Dove said that it could but that there were other floodplain management activities that the Town could implement to make up for it. Councilman Bates suggested Council consider excluding all prefirm structures, not just historic.

Councilman Gannon made a motion to hold first reading of the ordinance to amend Chapter 4 Article 3 of the McClellanville Code of Ordinances Town's current Flood Ordinance #2245 and to amend The Town's Building Code Ordinance 11.4.2 Floodplain Management. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scott and carried by a unanimous vote of Council.

Next, Mayor Leland opened a public hearing for the Ordinance to Adopt a Budget FY 2024-2025 and to set the property tax operating millage rate at 0.0118 (11.8 mills) an increase of 2 mills. Resident Jeremy Ellisor asked for the reasoning behind the millage increase. Mayor Leland said that the cost of everything has increased and that it would be a \$30 increase to properties with a \$500,000 home. He said that the Town's millage was one of the lowest in the state and that Council had not increased the millage in the last ten years. Councilman Scott said that the purchase of the McClellanville school also increased the need for more capital. He said that residents overwhelmingly wanted the Town to purchase the school and the cost to maintain and get it into working order were costly. Councilman Baldwin said that the intent was for the school to be self-sustaining at some point but we were not there yet. Mr. Ellisor expressed concern that once the taxes were raised, they would not come down. Councilman Bates said that Council had lowered the millage rate in the past.

There being no further comments, Mayor Leland called for a motion. Councilman Gannon made a motion to hold final reading of the Ordinance to Adopt a Budget FY 2024-2025 and to set the property tax operating millage rate at 0.0118 (11.8 mills) an increase of 2 mills. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scott and carried by a unanimous vote of Council.

Council considered appointment of a new Planning Commission member. The Planning Commission unanimously nominated Adam Freeze. Councilman Gannon made a motion to appoint Mr. Freeze. The motion was seconded by Councilman Baldwin and carried by a unanimous vote of Council.

MS. McClellan gave an update on the Micogrid grant. Dr. Sez Russcher, with Clemson University had submitted the grant application and stated that the selection process would be completed in August/September. She felt that the partnership with Dominion Energy was key and was very optimistic about the chances of being awarded the grant.

Next Council briefly discussed the McClellanville School feasibility study from Trident Construction. Ms. McClellan said that they reported from the walk through that the original school building and the classroom wings along with the cafeteria additions are in sound structural condition. They did recommend consulting with a structural engineer to study the purpose of the reuse of the building to see if any structural strengthening or modifications would be necessary to meet the intended use of the building.

Council discussed a municipal facility request to use underneath Town Hall on Saturday, July 6 from 3:30 PM – 8:00 PM for a baby shower. Council was concerned about the boating activity at the landing that day since it would be the 4th of July weekend. They asked Ms. McClellan to see if there was another date that could be used and if not, to advise the applicant that parking would most likely be an issue on that weekend.

There were no questions regarding the April financial statements.

There were no public comments.

Councilman Gannon made a motion to go into executive session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Bates.

Council returned from executive session. Mayor Leland noted that no votes were taken during executive session. Councilman Gannon made a motion to authorize Mayor Leland to approve performance and pay adjustment increases for full time town staff. The motion was seconded by Councilman Bates and carried by a unanimous vote of Council.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle A. McClellan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michelle A. McClellan
Clerk of Council