

Council Meeting Minutes
For
September 10, 2007
Branchville Town Hall
7:00 P.M.

PRESENT

Mayor Tim Cooner
Mayor Pro Tem Dukes
Councilman Glenn Miller
Councilwoman Georgianna Harmon
Councilwoman Amy Bryant
Councilwoman Benita Gibbs
Councilman Chris Ott

OTHERS PRESENT

Rhonda Thompson Town Clerk

GUESTS

Dan Campbell	Carolyn Campbell	Betty Skolasky
Debra Perugini	Perry Perugini	Sharon Ott
Treesa Suggs	Sally Whisenhunt	Luther Folk
Phyllis Overstreet	Beatrice Miller	Sarah Brunson
Luvenia Williams	Beverly Berry	

Mayor Cooner called the meeting to order and asked that all stand for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Mayor Cooner welcomed everyone out tonight.

Mayor Cooner said it was that time of year when our Audit is presented and the Mayor introduced Lori Salley with C.C. McGregor. Ms. Salley went over, in detail, the areas that she felt were the most important. Ms. Salley advised Council if they had any questions, to stop her during the presentation. At the end of the Audit presentation Ms. Salley said she enjoyed working with the Mayor and the Town Clerk and thought the Town Clerk was doing a great job. Mayor Cooner addressed Ms. Salley and asked in her opinion was the Town in pretty good shape? Ms. Salley answered by saying that in her opinion the Town's assets are very favorable. Councilman Miller then addressed one of Ms. Salley's recommendations and put it in the form of a motion, that if we don't have a policy in place for making loans to employees, and until we have a policy put together, no loans be made. Councilman Miller motioned and Councilwoman Harmon seconded. Councilman Miller also brought up the credit card receipts that were missing from the bills, and Mayor Cooner replied that when some people go to classes and seminars and use the credit card, sometimes the receipts are not brought back into the Town Hall. Mayor Cooner said let us go through the rest of the recommendations. Next was the Police Department deposits were not made on a timely manner and Mayor Cooner said

his timely was different than Ms. Salley's, being that the Department of Public Safety audited the Police Department and we have never failed an audit. Mayor Cooner said he wanted his Clerk of Court to make sure that her receipts, tickets and coinciding money matched.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Cooner asked the pleasure of Council on the approval of minutes Mayor Pro Tem Dukes motioned and Councilwoman Bryant seconded.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – AGENDA ITEMS/NON AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Cooner asked for public comments on items of agenda, hearing none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS OF OTHER MATTERS

Mayor Cooner asked for public comments of any other matter, Councilwoman Gibbs spoke to say that she has a problem with dogs while she is out walking and she contacted Animal Control and they told her to call the Town of Branchville. Mayor Cooner then said that for the past thirty-eight years, the Highway Department has come and cleaned up for Rayl Rode Daze and as of last week no one has come to help clean up. Mayor Cooner said the Town's crew of three handled most all of Highway 78, and today the Highway Department shows up with more than seven workers and only made it from the Railroad track to right in front of Councilwoman Harmon's house on one side of the street. Mayor Cooner said a letter would be sent to the Highway Department. Councilwoman Bryant brought up the stumps and parking problems at the Horton ball field. Mayor Cooner said while we are on the subject of the ball field, we have a new scoreboard purchased for the Town by Coca-Cola, but now we find out it has no clock on it. Mayor Cooner then said anyone who would like to donate money to invest in our youth; they are in need of uniforms and other items. Mayor Cooner said he sponsored a team and he challenged others to do the same. Mayor Cooner said new bathrooms and a new concession stand are needed also.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT

Mayor Cooner asked the pleasure of Council for approving the financial report, and after several questions from Councilwoman Harmon, it was motioned to approve by Councilwoman Bryant and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Dukes.

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

Police Department

-Mayor Cooner said the Town had an armed robbery at the EZ Shop and within three days, the first suspect was arrested, and as of today three of the four are in jail. The Town also had a strong-armed robbery, of a man in a wheel chair, and this suspect has been arrested, as well. Mayor Cooner said the Police Department is doing a good job.

Administrative Office

-Councilman Miller addressed Mayor Cooner and asked what the people at the Peanut Plant said in response to our letter. Mayor Cooner said Mr. Sublett McAlhany did contact him and said when he could get the board members together he would schedule a

meeting with the Town Council. Councilman Miller then said that a fireman contacted him and said the Town could have the Old Yellow Fire Truck, but they could not locate the title. Mayor Cooner said the truck needs more mechanic work done than the Town can afford to do. Councilman Miller then requested that the Town write a letter thanking them for the offer. Mayor Cooner agreed to write the letter. Councilman Miller then brought up the emergency plan that was discussed at the last Council meeting, and said that we are responsible for the well being of the Town. Councilman Miller said the reverse 911 is very expensive and the Town can't afford that. Councilman Miller mentioned getting a siren put on a pole to sound when there is an emergency in the Town. Mayor Cooner said we would have to hire an electrician to see if we can get the old one to work, or would have to purchase a new one. Councilman Miller then asked us to contact the SC Regional Housing Authority and let them know that the fence and ditch was not being taken care of located at the Turnkey apartments.

Public Works

-Mayor Cooner said the men are doing a good job. Mayor Cooner said we are under a Consent Order because of a CBP issue with the Town, and we are in compliance with all areas of the Consent Order. Mayor Cooner then passed around the letter to DHEC for the signatures of the Council.

Mayors Report

-Mayor Cooner said we advertised for bids on the Freight Depot, and we have \$95,000.00 to spend. Mayor Cooner said the Railroad wants a fence along side the track. The Town received one bid on the Freight Depot project and it was \$165,900.00.

Mayor Cooner then passed out letter from the Orangeburg County Fine Arts Center regarding the Mayors Wreaths and Trees. Mayor Cooner said it was something we had participated in the past and asked Council what they wanted to do this year. Councilwoman Bryant motioned and Councilwoman Gibbs seconded.

Mayor Cooner then asked whether the Council wanted to place an advertisement in the Times and Democrat for Rayl Rode Daze and Council agreed to do so.

Mayor Cooner said that in past years, at Rayl Rode Daze, we have always handled food and refreshments for the law enforcement officers that come to help during the Festival. Mayor Cooner asked Council to put it in the form of a motion to continue this service. Councilwoman Bryant motioned and Councilman Miller seconded. Mayor Cooner then asked if the Council wanted to sponsor a float for Rayl Rode Daze and Council agreed not to have a float and if they wanted to spend that kind of money to donate it to the ball clubs.

Mayor Cooner discussed the possibility of raising taxes for the Town of Branchville. Mayor Cooner went over in detail how much a 2-mil increase would affect different residents of the Town. Mayor Cooner said this increase should take place in January 2008.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Cooner covered this topic earlier in the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Cooner said the Councilwoman Harmon brought to his attention, information regarding Business Licenses. Mayor Cooner said he has done some research on the Business Licenses, by calling the Municipal Association and visiting some of the other Municipalities. Mayor Cooner said that he really liked the Ordinance that the Town of St. George abides by. Mayor Cooner explained in detail a new Business License Ordinance with a new rate structure that he would like the Council to consider adopting. Mayor Cooner also stated that if the Council approves this new Business License Ordinance, he would like to have it prepared, when the licenses come up for renewal March 31st, 2008.

PROGRESS ON CAPITAL PROJECTS

Mayor Cooner said plans are being put together for the Town Hall renovations. The Rural Development Regional Water project is finally starting to proceed, and on October 10th the plans will be delivered to DHEC and Rural Development.

ITEMS OF INFORMATION

Mayor Cooner said Jenny Carlisle asked to rent the Old High School Cafeteria for storage space for two to three months. Councilman Miller asked why don't they use Todd Owens storage buildings. Mayor Cooner said he thought all prior involvement needs closure before someone else moving in. Council denied the request to rent out due to other circumstances.

Mayor Cooner reminded Council that Rayl Rode Daze opening ceremonies would be held at 12:00 noon. Mayor Cooner asked for approval to hire some local people to clean up the Town at night so the Town would look good on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Mayor Pro Tem Dukes motioned and Councilman Miller seconded.

Mayor Cooner asked to go into executive session to discuss a contractual manner. Councilwoman Bryant motioned and Mayor Pro Tem Dukes seconded.

After executive session, Mayor Cooner briefly advised Council the he had a conversation with the gentleman that visited us from OSHA and the Town will be cited one violation that will carry a fine, and all other findings have been corrected.

Mayor Cooner asked for a motion to adjourn Mayor Pro Tem Dukes motioned and Councilman Miller seconded.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rhonda Thompson
Town Clerk