

Town of Andrews

Andrews Town Council Meeting
Thursday, May 25, 2023 5:00 p.m.
Black River Cypress Reserve
16368 County Line Road Avenue Andrews, SC 29510

The Town of Andrews met for its Monthly Town Council Meeting on Thursday, May 25, 2023. Mayor Frank McClary presiding in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m.

Invocation was rendered by Dr. Marian Thompson
Pledge of Allegiance was recited by everyone.

Town Officials Present:

Mayor Frank McClary
Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Lee
Council Member Angela Anderson
Council Member Robert Ulrich
Council Member Amy Flagler

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Lee and seconded by Council Member Angela Anderson to approve the minutes for the Thursday, April 20, 2023 Town Council Meeting, **Mayor Frank McClary; Yes, Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Lee; Yes, Council Member Amy Flagler; Yes, Council Member Angela Anderson; Yes, Council Member James Altman; Yes, Council Member Robert Ulrich; Yes, motion carried.**

Monthly Bank Statements

The monthly financial statements were included in the Council's packet for informational purposes only.

Financial Report

Brenda Jackson, CPA for the Town of Andrews provided Town Council members with a copy of the Town of Andrews Profit Loss Budget vs. Actual report for the nine months ended April 30, 2023. Due to personal matters Brenda Jackson could not attend the meeting. Council members were instructed to provide any questions to the Town Clerk so that Ms. Jackson could provide responses at a later time.

New Business

First Reading: Town of Andrews FY2024 Proposed Operating Budget Ordinance No. 2023-05. Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Lee and seconded by Council Member Angela Anderson to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 2023-05, Town of Andrews FY2024 Proposed Operating Budget. FY 2023-2024 Proposed Revenue \$3,810,100.00; Proposed Expenditures \$3,810,100.00; Estimated Millage 137 and percentage change in Expenditures and Revenues from FY 2022-2023 -2.52%. **Mayor Frank McClary; Yes, Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Lee; Yes, Council Member Amy Flagler; Yes, Council Member Angela Anderson; Yes, Council Member James Altman; Yes, Council Member Robert Ulrich; Yes, motion carried.**

Hospitality Tax Resolution Number 2023-05 Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Lee and seconded by Council Member Angela Anderson to approve Hospitality Tax Resolution Number 2023-05; a resolution to repeal the Town of Andrews, S. C., July 22, 1999 Resolution consenting to the Town collection of local accommodations and hospitality taxes. **Mayor Frank McClary; Yes, Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Lee; Yes, Council Member Amy Flagler; Yes, Council Member Angela Anderson; Yes, Council Member James Altman; Yes, Council Member Robert Ulrich; Yes, motion carried.**

Presentation

Town of Andrews Visioning Plan by Earth Design, Inc. Arnett Muldrow & Associates and Studio Main, LLC. Trip Muldrow of Muldrow & Associates and Erin Pate of Earth design, Inc provided a presentation of the first draft of the Andrews Downtown Master and Community Connectivity Plan. Trip Muldrow spoke about the project goals/themes of the visioning plan:

- A Connected Andrews- trails, parks, pedestrians, neighborhoods; A Resilient Andrews- infrastructure, storm recovery, environmentally sensitive design
- A Vibrant Andrews Economy- entrepreneurialism, regional dynamics
- A Growing Andrews- intentional planning, respect of character, affordable housing
- An Involved Andrews- Communication, partnerships, funding, organization

The team conducted a market analysis that indicated that the market analysis within a 15 minutes' drive time is a conservative estimate. It was noted that consumer demand is estimated to be \$105.3 million dollars and the retail supply is an estimated \$105.4 million dollars; the market appears to be at an equilibrium. It was reported that the Town is gaining in the general merchandise market arena. However, the Town is leaking \$4.3 million in the full-service dining arena. It appears that the Town could have the potential to grow in restaurants serving specialty foods. The Town could support micro-retail, independent specialty retail and emporium style stores with the development of the state park. Entrepreneurs who invest in the markets of outfitting, hunting, rentals and cycling could tap into the current \$1.3 million retail leakage from this area and have the potential to be successful with the development of the state park.

The developers of the Town of Andrews South Carolina Master Plan & Community Connectivity Plan identified several major focus points within the plan to include:

- Development of a Black River Environmental Career Center that will focus on environmental education along Conifer Street.
- Development of Andrews Nature Preserve to include a nature park and nature center at the current site of the lagoon, property which is owned by the town.
- Development of the Rosemary Path, Black River Connector, Downtown Main Street Revitalization to include a Streetscape Master Plan.
- Development of the Railroad Bed Park to include on street parking, improved sidewalks and greenway; in addition, it would allow space to host festivals and provide spacing for farmer's market and creation of a bioswale to increase stormwater capacity and allow for bioremediation.

The team recommended and provided a plan for a greenway and trail networks that will connect the town to Red's Landing. The greenway would run along S. Morgan Avenue and Hwy 41. Additional phases could be added in the future that would allow for the greenway to extend to the Black River Cypress Preserve and the future Black River State Park.

The developers worked on a marketing brand for the town that would enable the community to embrace its resources and opportunities, build community pride and curate the visitor experience now and in the future. The Community Brand would be used to create a revised Town Seal. The Master Plan also includes proposed Community Brand Wayfinding signs and flags.

A Community Branding Position Statement was also written to present to Town Council for their consideration: "Share in our history. Founded in the late 18th century, Andrews emerged as a small agricultural community deeply connected to the surrounding land. Over time, we grew into a bustling hub, serving as a vital stop along the railroad and a center for trade and commerce. Today we are a thriving small town with a bright vision for the future. Share in our culture as you explore the stories that shaped our community. We are a warm and welcoming place that celebrates with events and activities throughout the year. Our down-home Southern cooking is a savory delight, our musical history is rich, and our Gullah Geechee background celebrates our cultural diversity. Share in our vision as we evolve into a hub along South Carolina's pristine and captivating Black River. We are planning a vibrant place where residents and visitors have easy access to the Black River Cypress Preserve and future state Park where kayaking, canoeing, cycling, and fishing are just minutes away from downtown. In Andrews we envision a community that fosters unity, respect, and a shared sense of purpose. We invite you to join us in this vision and be part of a town where locals and visitors come together, enriching one another's lives through meaningful connections and collective growth. We are Andrews, South Carolina! Share in our Community.

Mayor McClary introduced Erin Pate, a representative of the Open Space Institute (OSI), whose primary task is to help nonprofit, environmental conservation and advocacy organizations meet their goals for programmatic and governance excellence. The OSI was started in New York City but some of its employees decided ten years ago to move to South Carolina for two purposes; to conserve important land like the land along the Black River for flood mitigation and recreational purposes. She elaborated on how the development of the new state park will be a bridge and economic opportunity for the local community. She stated that she is excited to be a part of this partnership, and to work with Andrews. Moreover, she stated that her organization is fully committed to helping the Town move this project forward.

Citizens' Comments

Jerome Johnson, 6 Pope Street thanked the Mayor, Town council and staff for the work they are doing to develop a visioning plan for the Town. He voiced concerns with the intersection at Seaboard Road, MLK Drive and County Line Road. He described a near tragedy that almost took place today when he and his wife approached this intersection and proceeded to make a left turn on to County Line Road and a tractor trailer truck ran through the stop sign; he stated that he and his wife could have been killed. He stressed how important it is for the Department of Transportation to install additional traffic control devices at this very dangerous intersection. Mayor McClary stated that they have made several inquiries to the Department of Transportation requesting that they take action to make this intersection safer, however nothing has been done. He agrees that it's time to move to the State Level to voice these concerns and demand action before a fatality occurs.

A neighboring citizen stood before Town Council and stated that the proposed visioning plan for the Town is very beautiful. She recommended that the Town should enforce its laws regarding the operation of commercial vehicles as it pertains to the established truck route. She stated that she is a part of a fifth generation who has property along the Black River and will be directly affected by the development of the new state park. She has a plan to become an entrepreneur in starting her own business to offer boat tours along the Black River.

Monte Matthews, 640 Lanes Creek Drive, Georgetown S.C. introduced her business Kidogo Farms, a fruit and veggie homesteading farm, here to serve the community. Kidogo Farms is an active farming homestead that was created in an effort to reintroduce farming back into a farming community. They provide seed storing lessons and small gardening classes to help children in the local community have a safe space to relearn how to grow. They will offer fresh produce like beans, okra, tomatoes and a variety of peppers for local purchase. They will also offer exotic fruits, like roselle and passion fruits as well as heirloom varieties from the local Gullah-Geechee community. In addition, they offer farm tours, overnight stays - from camping options to small cottage offerings. She encouraged all to take advantage of all that Kidogo Farms has to offer while their services are being offered to all at no cost as Kidogo Farms will soon implement a fee for their services.

Kisha Kinard of Sweetgrass Roots Farm, Founder & Sweetgrass Basket maker from Walterboro S.C. stated that she was in town earlier today attending another event to obtain some training and to make people aware of some funding she was awarded through USDA called Value Added-Producer Grants. The Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program provides grants and matching funds that can be used for planning activities or for working capital expenses related to producing or marketing a value added agricultural products. She stated that she was attending the Town council meeting to acquire as much information as possible about the future economic growth plans for the Town of Andrews and was very thankful for the invite.

In closing, Mayor McClary thanked the Butler Foundation for allowing the Town to have this meeting at the Black River Cypress Preserve. He thanked the presenters and citizens for their attendance at the meeting. He added that the Town has to develop both a long- term and short-term plan to acquire resources and funding to execute these projects. The town already has 80% of funding through the accommodations tax to fund one of its alleyway projects. Capitalizing from this park that will be located 11 miles away from the Town is a great opportunity to create a vision for this community.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Eddie Lee and seconded by Council Member Angela Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 p.m.

Town Council Meeting minutes submitted by Town Clerk Chaconas Parson.