

**TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT, SOUTH CAROLINA  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
Monday, November 5, 2018  
Municipal Complex, Committee Meeting Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
100 Ann Edwards Lane, Mount Pleasant, SC 29464**

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Guang Ming Whitley, Chair and Kevin Cunnane

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tom O'Rourke

**STAFF PRESENT:** Eric DeMoura, Town Administrator

**ALSO PRESENT:** **Nicolle Davies**, Executive Director of Charleston County Libraries; and **Brenda Corley**, Principal, Oceanside Collegiate Academy

Ms. Whitley called the meeting to order at 9:16 a.m.

**1. Approval of Minutes from the [October 1, 2018](#) meeting**

*Mr. Cunnane moved for approval; seconded by Ms. Whitley. All present voted in favor.*

**2. Public Comments**

**[None]**

**3. Update from the Charleston County Public Library on the construction of the Wando Mount Pleasant Library**

Ms. Whitley stated that she would like to thank Councilman Bob Brimmer for raising this issue and encouraging Council members to have the Charleston County Library give a short presentation.

**Nicolle Davies**, Executive Director, Charleston County Libraries, stated that this is a perfect time to do an update on the new Wando Mount Pleasant Library. She stated that this came from the Bond Initiative that was passed by voters in 2014 for \$108.5 million dollars to build five new

facilities and renovate and update the existing branches. She said Mount Pleasant currently has two libraries and the new Wando Mount Pleasant library will be the third location. She said the current Mount Pleasant Regional Library is the busiest library in the entire system of the 16 locations the County currently has. She said this branch is only 14,000 square feet. She said the Old Village Library is only approximately 1,400 square feet. She said the new Wando Mount Pleasant library will be 40,000 square feet, so it will be the largest library in the construction plan. She said if the construction stays on schedule, the library will be open to the public in April 2019. She said this library will house approximately 100,000 items, to include books, AV materials, and because the space is available, they were able to do innovative and creative things. She said there will be dedicated areas for children, teens and adults, which will also include their own computer spaces, as well as meeting room spaces. She said there will be a wonderful children's story-time room and there will also be an auditorium that will seat approximately 250 people, which can be divided into smaller spaces for approximately 125 people each. She said there will be four small meeting/conference room spaces. She said they can be divided up to accommodate 25 people or less per space. She said this will be the only facility that will have a digital studio with a green screen and editing materials. She said they will have staff available to help train individuals on the use of the equipment. She said they will also have a maker's space, which is a space that is intended to get messy for craft projects, such as quilting and woodworking. This space will be easy to clean up. She said they will also have an extensive number of public computers for each of the age groups and will also have a dedicated space for computer training from basic computer skills to advanced classes. She said they will have Wi-Fi throughout the building and active for the adjacent outdoor patio areas. She said they are very excited to bring all the new things that this building will feature.

**Bob Brimmer**, 2380 Parsonage Woods Lane, stated that he has received a great deal of correspondence from residents in the north area wondering when the new library will open as it has been a long time coming. He

asked if there has been discussion regarding cooperative programming with schools that are located nearby.

Ms. Davies stated that in the strategic plan that the Board adopted in the fall of 2017, they established a programming department. She said they will be bringing someone onboard to look at system-wide programming. She said programming is a big portion of what public libraries do today. She said obviously the collection is a big part of what the library does; however, they also do a great deal of community programming, because it is free, open to the public and welcome to everyone. She said what they found is that they did not always have equity across the system with the 16 branches. She said sometimes there are individuals who are very talented at programming who reach out and work with their community neighbors and schools and sometimes the branches are too small and do not have that talent on staff. She said she was seeing equity issues. She said if the branch had that talent on their staff, the patrons benefitted from great programming. She said if the staff did not have that talent, the patrons may not know what they are missing. She said they have established a programming department and internally promoted an individual who will be moving into this position at the end of November. She said one of the expectations of that new role is to reach out and establish a stronger community relationship, including with the schools and educators as well as other nonprofits in the community.

Mr. Brimmer stated that both he and Mr. Owens sit on the CARTA Board and have made a request with CARTA to establish a shelter at that location, with the existing bus stop in front of Wando High School. He said the idea was that it could be done in coordination with the opening of the new library so that they would have better access. He asked if there was anything that the library may need from the Town prior to the opening such as coordination with traffic.

Ms. Davies stated that the Town has been great to work with and their biggest challenges were earlier on with flood mitigation and other issues near the roundabout. She stated that they are currently 75% complete on the building. She said there is very little that will slow them down. She

said they are just as anxious to get the building open as the Town. She said this will be the first of the five libraries that will be opening.

Mr. Cunnane stated that regarding the repair or renovation of the existing library, what is the schedule on this.

Ms. Davies stated that they are currently working on the renovation schedule. She stated that they are a component unit of Charleston County and must work with them on the timing and execution of the projects. She said the directive that she was provided was that the new buildings needed to be complete and then work on the renovation schedule can begin. She is hopeful this will be moved along faster now that the 5<sup>th</sup> building is scheduled to break ground very soon for its construction. She said they are looking very intentionally at the closures and how they are rolled out. She does not believe they would like to renovate the Old Village library at the same time the regional library on Anna Knapp is being renovated, although the new library is open, because they do not wish to close access to both libraries.

Mr. Cunnane stated that there is Costco, Wando High School, Carolina Park, and a lot of activity going on in this area. He asked if the Town has looked at what this will do to the roads, particularly this traffic circle.

Mr. DeMoura stated that he believes that the Town will continue to monitor this area going forward and if it begins to receive a heavy volume, in an already congested area, not to mention the elementary school, the Town will look at it again.

Mr. Cunnane stated that he travels this area regularly and finds it troublesome.

Ms. Whitley stated that the anticipated opening is April 2019 and asked if there would be a large event planned for this opening.

Ms. Davies stated that there will be several events planned. She stated that they were waiting to move further along in the project to know what the timeframe would be, because with construction, the timeframe changes. She said they are confident there will not be further delays and the opening should be sometime in April 2019. She said there will be a lot

of activity around this grand opening, likely an entire month of activities following the grand opening.

Ms. Whitley stated that she would also like to have further discussions with Ms. Davies regarding the Old Village library, because there are residents in the community who are interested in potential fundraising efforts to add a utility room for children's offerings and she would like to discuss this further.

Ms. Davies stated that this would be easy to explore because the Town owns the Old Village library. She stated that they would be happy to work with the Town on this effort.

Mr. Brimmer stated that since there is a Mount Pleasant library, what would be the name of the new library.

Ms. Davies stated that the official name of the new facility is Wando Mount Pleasant Library and the decision regarding the name was made by County Council. She said the Library Board put together a series of recommendations and County Council made the decision.

**Brenda Corley**, Principal of Oceanside Collegiate Academy asked if they would be able to rent a space in the new library, because they are not allowed to rent any County facilities. She said she was very interested in using the library for space. She does not have a place in her building where she can meet with more than 50 people in a classroom, so they would be very interested in utilizing the library facilities. She stated that they do not have a media center.

Ms. Davies stated that the library does not charge to use their rooms. She stated because they have the square footage in this building, the teen and children's areas are quite sizeable. She said there will also be small meeting room spaces which will accommodate 4 to 6 people, which is great for students to come and collaborate or small businesses to get together and brainstorm. She stated that the days of the library being a quiet repository of books is over. She said there will be quiet areas and areas where children can come together and make noise. She said this is a need they can meet.

Mr. Cunnane asked if the Old Village library was the smallest in the system.

Ms. Davies stated that there is a smaller library in St. Paul which is approximately 1,200 square feet and the McClellanville branch is approximately 1,000 square feet.

Mr. Cunnane asked if the system is open to other spaces for similar small opportunities.

Ms. Davies stated that it is a funding challenge. She stated that the funding comes through tax dollars through the County. She said they would like to have as many libraries as possible.

Mr. Cunnane asked if the library would be open to donated space, because pool club houses in the different developments have space.

Ms. Davies stated that they would have to have an operating budget to have it staffed.

Mr. Cunnane asked what the budget would be for a 1,400 square foot space.

Ms. Davies stated that she is not certain, and it would depend on the hours of operation.

Ms. Whitley stated that the Town is looking forward to having the new library.

#### **4. Presentation by Oceanside Collegiate Academy**

**Brenda Corley**, Principal of Oceanside Collegiate Academy stated that they are a free public charter high school in Mount Pleasant, located on Faison Road near the Mount Pleasant Airport. She has been educating children for approximately 20 years, but this is her first experience with a charter school. She stated that Mayor Haynie, Councilman Santos and Councilwoman Whitley visited the school. She stated that they are built to house 350 students for each session. She stated that they currently have two sessions; one from 7:30 am – 11:30 am and the afternoon session from 11:30 – 3:30 pm. She stated that they have built their schedule around Wando High School, so they do not affect traffic. She

stated that their mission is based around serving students in a small, safe environment. She stated that they will never exceed 675 to 700 students. This coming year will be their first year where they are full and on a lottery. They have 150 spots with 475 students attempting to fill those spots. She said they will hold their second lottery on November 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm. She stated that their end of course scores are higher than the South Carolina Charter School district, Charleston County and the State of South Carolina. She stated that they are an honors curriculum and their 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades and 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades are taking a full dual enrollment or college curriculum. She stated that a student graduating from Oceanside is able to graduate with a high school diploma and up to 58 college credits. She said they started with 20 seniors their first year. She said this past year, 77 seniors brought in \$3.5 million in scholarships, both academic and athletic. She said seniors this year would have been attending Oceanside for three years and their goal this year for these seniors is \$7 million dollars in academic and athletic scholarships. She said 80% of their juniors this year will take college classes and 90% of all seniors are taking college classes and next year 95% of all sophomores will be qualified to take college classes in the fall. She stated that Oceanside has 19 sports and said last year, they took home two State Championships although they are not members of the High School league, they were "at large" members. She said Lacrosse, Golf and Swimming will allow you to compete for a State Championship although they are not members of the High School League. She stated that they took home two State Championships. She said this year, their Tennis and Volleyball teams are playing for lower State championships and their Lady's Golf Team just brought home their second State championship. She said cross country is growing and they are contemplating adding wrestling next year. She said as they get more settled in the community and review their budget, they will continue to add programs. She stated that as a school leader for a Charter School versus a school leader for a comprehensive traditional high school, being fiscally responsible allows her the freedom to make budget decisions. She stated that they gave their teachers a performance-based bonus ranging from \$6,000 to

\$11,000 last year. She stated that it was the best day of her career being able to write those checks. She said they spent \$9,500 to do what it costs Charleston County \$17,000. She said those are facts and they are educating students for almost half as much. She said the fiscal responsibility and freedom to make decisions that are best for the students, quicker and faster than a comprehensive traditional school district allows their schedule and the ability for their students to earn dual enrollment are some of what make Oceanside a great place. She said they are not for everyone, but for the 675 to 700 students, it is amazing.

Mr. Cunnane asked when they would be opening a junior high school.

Ms. Corley stated that the Department of Transportation is worried about stacking vehicles. However, she is looking at land adjacent to their current school. She sent out a survey and received over 600 responses almost immediately, so there is interest. She said it would benefit the school and students to get them ready earlier.

Mr. Cunnane stated that the parents of the junior high population really want this school and it will fill up quickly.

Ms. Corley stated that she is ready whenever she can obtain donated land.

## **5. Adjourn**

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 9:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Ashe  
November 5, 2018