

CHESTER COUNTY COUNCIL SPECIAL CALLED

EMERGENCY MEETING

R. Carlisle Roddey Government Complex

1476 J A Cochran Bypass, Chester, SC

Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 10:00 AM

MINUTES

Present: Vice Chairman Joe Branham, Councilman Brad Jordan, Councilman Mike Vaughn, Councilman Alex Oliphant, Councilman Pete Wilson, Clerk to Council Karen Lee and County Attorney Joanie Winters. Councilwoman Mary Guy was in attendance by zoom.

1. **Call to Order-** Vice Chairman Branham called the meeting to order.
2. **Executive Session-**Councilman Vaughn motioned to go into Executive Session, second by Councilman Oliphant. Vote was 6-0 to approve.
 - a. To Receive Legal Advice Regarding County Administration Procedures.
3. **Council Actions Following Executive Session-**Councilman Oliphant motioned to go back to Regular Session, second by Councilman Jordan. Vote 6-0 to approve.
 - a. **Action Taken Regarding Legal Advice for County Administration Procedures.**

Vice Chairman Branham asked Sheriff Dorsey to give a statement:

Sheriff Dorsey addressed the County department heads and stated action had been taken regarding the County Supervisor Shane Stuart who was in law enforcement custody. The County will continue to run as usual with the roles of the department heads, they are the ones who make the County run and operate. There was a lot that had happened in the last forty-eight hours and things the Sheriff department could not talk about. The investigation was currently being led by SLED with a lot of people being involved with more to be revealed. They are statutory laws that prohibited them from disclosing answers, the Council is prepared to move the County forward with the help of all the department heads. He told them to continue to work hard and do the best job they can do for the citizens of Chester County. Chester has experienced a lot of pain recently and we have another painful moment, but he has confidence everyone will continue to get through it.

County Attorney Joanie Winters said in the absence of the supervisor they need to make sure things are captured that need to be done to keep the County moving. In order for this to happen she asked Council to amend the procurement policy by resolution to give County Treasurer Tommy Darby the authority to sign off on purchase order requests. Councilman Wilson motioned to adopt the resolution, second by Councilman Vaughn. Vote 6-0 to approve.

Vice Chairman Branham read the following statement to the Citizens of Chester County:

Chester County was the recipient of disheartening allegations today about an individual on our team. Allegations that saddens all of us. It is important to recognize that the allegations made are against an individual and not Chester County, and not Chester County Council. We have come together today as a Council to discuss this and to plan on how to move forward. Chester County Council remains a resilient, governing body and while we may disagree from time to time, we stand together strong to always govern in the best interest of Chester County and its citizens. Our message today to the people who reside in Chester County is to continue to believe in our County, to support this governing body, and to stand with us as we grow and prosper in Chester County. We are open for business here in Chester County and as a Council, we are together working to keep that happening!

Vice Chairman Branham read the following statement to the Employees of Chester County:

Chester County was the recipient of disheartening allegations today about an individual on our team. Allegations that saddens all of us. It is important to recognize that the allegations made are against an individual and not Chester County, and not Chester County Council. We have come together today as a Council to discuss this and to plan on how to move forward. Chester County Council remains a resilient, governing body and while we may disagree from time to time, we stand together strong to always govern in the best interest of Chester County and its citizens. We want all County employees to understand that business as usual will continue. We are open for business in Chester County and as a Council, we are together working to keep that happening! We need all employees to come to work and to perform the duties required of your position to serve the public. We have just recently re-opened after being closed due to COVID-19 and we aim to show the public that we are here to serve, no matter what. This Council supports the employees who come to work every day, put in a strong effort for our County, and who work to make our County what it needs to be. Please, as Department Heads, make sure your employees understand this very important message from Chester County Council.

Vice Chairman Branham told county employees they were doing a great job. Attorney Winters told department heads any phone calls from the media they receive to send the request they have to her office. It would be improper for employees to respond to any request from the media.

4. Adjourn

Councilman Oliphant motioned to adjourn, second by Councilman Vaughn. Vote 6-0 to adjourn.

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, the Chester News & Reporter, The Herald in Rock Hill, SC, WSOC-TV, Channel 9 Eyewitness News, the Mfg. Housing Institute of SC, WRHI Radio Station, C&N2 News, WCNC News and Capitol Consultants were notified and a notice was posted on the bulletin board at the Chester County Government Building 24 hours prior to the meeting