Council approves fee agreement for $6.8M expansion

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WALHALLA — Oconee County Council gave final approval Tuesday to an incentive package for the parent company of the Cryovac brand to launch an almost $6.8 million expansion at its facility in Seneca.

Formerly known as "Project Laser" in council chambers, Sealed Air Corporation is a publicly held leading global manufacturer of a wide range of packaging and performance-based materials and equipment systems that now serve an array of food, industrial, medical and consumer applications.

The Oconee Economic Alliance has been working since the spring to convince the company's corporate leadership to place the project at the facilities off U.S. Highway 123 in Seneca rather than another location — with facilities in Arkansas, Texas and Missouri also in the running.

"This is an existing company performing an expansion here in the county of almost $7 million. ... This was a competitive expansion. We were in competition with

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EXPANSION: 'We appreciate what they're doing over there,' council chairman said

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two other locations as finalists," county administrator Scott Moulder told council on second reading last month. "So this is, again, another competitive process, and they are investing in their facility here."

Sealed Air will invest $6.78 million over five years in the project, all of which will be in tangible personal property (machinery and equipment).

Of the $6.78 million, about $2.8 million will be in new machinery and equipment, with the bulk of the investment taking place in 2017. The additional capital will be used to support facility integrity and operational efficiency, according to OEA executive director Richard Blackwell.

County council held a public hearing ahead of third and final reading of an ordinance approving the fee agreement with Sealed Air. In exchange for its investment, the agreement provides for a 6 percent assessment ratio for the company for a period of 30 years, as well as fixes the company's tax millage at the county's current rate of 215.0 mills over the same period.

The agreement also calls for the issuance of a 10-year, 10 percent special source revenue credit together with a one-time, $5,000 special source revenue credit.

"We appreciate what they're doing over there. They've got some amazing products and processes they're putting out of that plant ... and we certainly welcome the investment by Sealed Air Corporation," council chairman Paul Cain said.

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