Council tables decision on Keowee

BY NORMAN CANNADA
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WALHALLA — Members of the Oconee County Council tabled a decision Tuesday night on a proposed $220,000 fire substation, a cost that's about 20 percent higher than originally budgeted.

Instead, County Council instructed staff to look at the possibility of building a road in-house for the Keowee Falls fire substation rather than including the road in the contract costs.

The need for a longer road as well as some additional site work led to a $44,000 increase in the overall cost of the project to $219,633.83. Joel Davis Construction of Westminster is the firm that would build the substation.

Glenn Breed, assistant county administrator, said the land was donated for the substation but there is not a road to the property. Council Chairman Joel Thrift asked if the county could save money by constructing the gravel road with county workers instead of paying an outside firm to do it.



Thrift

Breed and County Administrator Scott Moulder said they would look into that possibility and have an answer at the June 18 County Council meeting.

Breed also said the Cherokee Lakes substation of the Pickett Post Fire Department will not be built with funds from the current budget year.

Falls fire substation

A site has not yet been selected for that substation.

The county has approved a plan to build a total of eight fire substations over the next few years to get all county residents within five miles of a fire station. Breed said the plan is designed to help with fire protection as well as lower Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings, which determines rates for homeowners insurance.

Two substations — Holly Springs, part of the Long Creek Fire Department, and Foxwood Hills part of the South Union Fire Department — have already been built. Keowee Falls, which would be part of the Salem Fire Department, would be the third substation built.

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TABLES: Atlanta company to complete county finance audit

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In other business, the council approved a contract with Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC of Atlanta to complete an audit of county finances. The contract will pay the company $49,900, which is a savings of about $15,000 over the audit the county paid for last year and about $20,000 less than the $70,000 budgeted for the service.

The council also gave Moulder the authority to negotiate with the Atlanta company for the next four years within council-approved budgeted amounts which would not be more than $52,000 in any year.

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