

Oconee could spend \$3M tonight

THE JOURNAL STAFF

WALHALLA —

Oconee County Council could OK spending more than \$3 million on the county rock quarry, fire trucks, vehicle maintenance and grant funds tonight at its first and only scheduled meeting of the month.

The bulk of the expense — more than \$2 million — is for six pumper fire trucks. Each truck has a 1,000-gallon tank and 350-horsepower diesel engine and includes loose equipment. One side-mount pumper could be purchased for \$338,576, and the other five trucks will be top-mounted at \$340,933 each.

Three of the trucks were in last year's budget, Oconee County Fire Chief Charlie King said, and three are in this year's budget. Purchasing six at once provided an opportunity for discounts as the county could buy "in bulk," he said.

Council will also consider \$300,000 in matching grant funds promised in April 2016 for the city of Seneca's electric bus fleet. Bus production delays also delayed the need to provide the match, though it has been included in the fiscal year 2019-2020 budget.

ON THE AGENDA

Electric upgrade at rock quarry: **\$287,980**
(10 percent contingency)
State contract tires: **\$40,000**
911 communications upgrade: **\$126,490**
Six pumper fire trucks: **\$2,043,241**
Electric bus expansion grant: **\$300,000**
Golden Corner Food Pantry: **\$3,000**

Other expenditures include \$40,000 for state contract tires, \$3,000 to the Golden Corner Food Pantry, electrical upgrades for the rock quarry's new mobile crusher and security upgrades in the E-911 communications center.

Four of the six items on the executive session list involve economic development matters — Anvil, Aztec, Bolt and Trout — and post-session discussion items include an agreement on Project Aztec and letter of support for Project Bolt.

OPTING OUT OF OPIOIDS

The sixth item on the executive session agenda centers around the ongoing nationwide litigation on opiate manufacturers.

Two options for a resolution follow executive session — one to opt out of the "nationwide class

certified for negotiation purposes" and the other to remain in the nationwide class.

In August, county attorney David Root said the Oconee County suit was "essentially consolidated with the other state cases for the pretrial matters." The council voted unanimously to join the suit in May 2018.

PLANNING AND PROCESSING

A 4 p.m. meeting of county council's planning and economic development committee will host Annie Caggiano's first update as the executive director of the Oconee Economic Alliance.

The committee will also hear presentations on code enforcement, the county's corridor plan progress and trail connectivity in the Upstate. Discussion items on the agenda include a billboard moratorium and the local accommodations tax ordinance.

A special called county council meeting will take place at 5 p.m., with an update on alternative waste processing methods from Oconee County administrator Amanda Brock.