

Regular Pickens County Council Meeting
February 10, 2014
6:30 PM

County Council met in regular session, in the Auditorium, County Administration Facility, with Chairman G. Neil Smith presiding. Agendas, bearing date, time, and location of meeting were mailed to Council members and local news media on February 1, 2014.

Council Members in attendance:

G. Neil Smith, Chairman
Jennifer H. Willis, V.C. Pro-Tem
Trey Whitehurst
Randy Crenshaw

Donna Owen, Clerk to Council

Absent:

Tom Ponder Vice Chairman
Jeff Martin

Staff:

Ralph Guarino, Interim Administrator
Ken Roper, County Attorney

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Smith called the meeting of February 10, 2014 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Chairman Smith further led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairman Smith opened the Public Forum and requested the Clerk to introduce the speakers who have signed up.

Hearing no citizens request to speak, Chairman Smith closed the public forum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 13,2014:

- Motion was made by Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis to approve the minutes. Chairman Smith stated he had requested the Clerk to place the names of the fire district appointments into the minutes. Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis concurred with that correction, and Councilman Trey Whitehurst gave the second. The minutes were unanimously approved as corrected.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:

Mr. Guarino updated Council of the following items.

Financials-Mr. Guarino stated the County has twelve years of financials on the web-site, and four years of budgets on the web as well.

Southern Health Partners- An agreement was signed with (SHP) for medical cost at the County Jail. This is a four-month trial period to see how this will work and then further discuss for a twelve month agreement. Chairman Smith explained this is the company that will administer the health/wellness part of the jail, and will free deputies from dispensing drugs. Councilman Trey Whitehurst had questions

regarding the maximum amount of funding. Chairman Smith stated this was a trial period in order to review the cost, and would come back at budget time with more details.

Inclement Weather- Mr. Guarino updated Council on the impending winter storm that is due this week, and informed Council he was communicating with Emergency Management and Roads and Bridges in order to keep everyone informed of possible closings. Mr. Guarino also updated Council on the amount of sand/salt and equipment that was on standby. Council stated they appreciated the communications from Emergency Management.

United States Department of Agriculture- (USDA) The County has received notification that all agencies that have loans/grants with the USDA must follow Equal Opportunity Provider/Employer guidelines on all County publications, letterhead, website, and emails.

Budget Meetings-Mr. Guarino informed Council that budget meetings were beginning with department heads and elected officials. The expectation is to have a first reading of the budget in April.

Capital Projects. Mr. Guarino updated Council on the following projects:

--Hagood Mill Amphitheater- bids were taken on 12/11/2013. Eight bids were submitted with Clayton Construction being awarded at \$513,000, and those costs were reduced to \$466,000. Chairman Smith stated he did not have recollection of that amount being discussed for this project. Other council members concurred. Chairman Smith further asked about the financing of said project. Mr. Guarino stated it was financed via the local accommodations tax reserve fund. Again, Chairman Smith stated he did not recall those funds being discussed.

--Liberty Fire Station-bids were taken on 09/18/2013. Five bids were submitted with Intercon Construction being awarded at \$530,500, with completion being in May/June. Councilman Trey Whitehurst asked if the Six Mile station was similar in costs. Mr. Guarino stated he thought the Six Mile station was in the same range, but would have to review to be certain.

--Magistrates Office Complex-pre-bid meetings were held on 2/4/2014 with sixteen construction companies at the meeting. Bids are due this week, but will more than likely be postponed due to inclement weather. During discussion, Mr. Guarino stated approximately \$1M was set aside for this project/complex. However, the numbers are difficult because the project is not new construction. Chairman Smith stated the project estimate is half that amount, and if the bids come in over, Council will need to further review.

--Pickens Fire Station-(Concord Church Road) plans are finalized, it is estimated that bids will go out next week. Mr. Guarino stated this is number one of three fire stations for Pickens, and plans have not been drawn for the next two (Wilson Ave. and Fox Squirrel). Chairman Smith stated if we were this far behind, then this must be the reason for the extension of the contract for fire service. Mr. Guarino stated he was not positive, but thought the ISO rating was the main factor. During discussion, Councilman Randy Crenshaw expressed concern about these three projects not being further along. It was his understanding they would all be complete this year. Chairman Smith stated he was assuming the same.

--Mile Creek Cabins-Grants have been secured, and the County is awaiting septic tank permits. This is the Duke Energy money that was gifted to the County. Mr. Guarino stated that he did receive an email and that DHEC had lost the original permits, so those have been resubmitted and it is his understanding that DHEC has the permits.

--Economic Development Building-Staff has moved into the new building on 2/7/14. The building is basically complete with the exception of a few items on the punch list, which final payment is not made until those items are complete.

COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

Chairman Smith informed the Council that a couple of businessmen were requesting meetings with him regarding different contractual items. Chairman Smith stated when he met with them, he would update Council. However, he has not committed to any meetings at this time.

Chairman Smith further stated to Council and the public that during a time of transition, such as the retirement of Mr. Hurst, that several issues will surface that need attention, and often that responsibility will be directed at the Chairman. Therefore, Chairman Smith stated he was cautious about issues during this time of transition.

MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:

Hearing no motions, Chairman Smith closed the motion period.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Motion was made by Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis, seconded by Councilman Randy Crenshaw and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda as proposed.

*Facility Rental Policy—Committee of the Whole

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- Motion was made by Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis, and seconded by Councilman Trey Whitehurst to convene into executive session for the stated purposes.

*Legal/Personnel

*Contractual

*Boards and Commissions

PUBLIC SESSION RECONVENED:

Chairman Smith called the public session back to order and advised the following motion.

- Councilman Trey Whitehurst moved to appoint citizens to the following fire districts. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis and unanimously passed.

Central the re-appointment of Garvin Bolding and Hueston Merck

Crosswell the re-appointment of Alvin Duncan and Tim Cobb

Liberty the re-appointment of Keith Culbreath and Brian Finley

Rocky Bottom the re-appointment of Frank Masters and Edward Kelley, and new appointment of Anne Clark to fill unexpired term of Gordon Clark.

Six Mile the re-appointment of Scott McCall.

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further Council business, Chairman Smith called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis, seconded by Councilman Randy Crenshaw and unanimously passed. Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

G. Neil Smith, Chairman