

May 21, 2007
Regular Council Meeting
6:00 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, May 16, 2007.

Council Members in attendance:

G. Neil Smith, Chairman
Ben L. Trotter, Vice Chairman
Tom E. Ponder, Vice Chairman Pro-Tempore
Randy Crenshaw
James B. London
Jennifer H. Willis

Staff: J. Chappell Hurst, County Administrator
Ken Roper, County Attorney
Donna Owen, Clerk to Council
Lynn Fisher, Assistant County Administrator
Ralph Guarino, Finance Director

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Smith called the meeting of May 21, 2007 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Tom Ponder was called upon for the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ben Trotter moved to approve the minutes as presented. Tom Ponder gave the second. Jennifer Willis requested (2) amendments one on page 1-- regarding a grammatical error with the sentence "Council was informed these trailers are not inhabitable." Also, page 5.--to correct the month in Mrs. Willis' comments to "July" and remove the word December.

Those amendments were accepted, and the minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT:

Mr. Hurst provided Council with the following memorandums.

Update on Fire fees for unimproved property

The question posed several weeks ago concerning whether or not fire fees could be levied upon unimproved property has been researched and we have concluded that they can. I have checked with the Assessor's office to determine a schedule of fees that could be applied based upon acreage and the amount of revenues that would be generated. Based upon the numbers that we have included in your report, it appears that approximately 10% of the revenues of a department could be generated on unimproved property without placing an undue burden upon these property owners. I think it is important to remember that unimproved property pays approximately \$1 per acre in property taxes; therefore, by placing a fee upon this property based upon an acreage it certainly does not place an undue tax burden upon the property owner. The Assessor

has written a program that could incorporate these fees on next year's tax notice if Council so chooses. Another important factor to remember is that forest fires are more prevalent than structure fires and currently there is no way to capture revenue for the services that are actually provided and vacant land owners are being subsidized by property owners who have residential property.

Update on Sea Level Sewer Installation

We have investigated the possibility of rock being present in the road adjacent to Sea Level property. It has been determined by soil borings that no rock was present at the depth of the sewer pipe installation; therefore, the cost to install the sewer will be approximately \$60,000. Ray Farley has contacted the Department of Commerce and the funds are available for this project. We will be proceeding to have the project engineered and bid out in the very near future. The installation of this line will provide sewer service to multiple industries in the area.

Update Road Assessment

The Road Assessment team has completed the assessment of all of the roads in Pickens County. The data is currently being compiled and the assessment numbers are being assigned to each road that will ultimately generate a list of each road and its condition. The roads will be listed from the worst impaired to the least impaired. Once this list is available, we will forward you this list as well as each of the municipalities will receive a list. We anticipate that the roads will be listed in alphabetical order under each assigned category. We anticipate that this process will be complete in the next two weeks as we are entering all of the data at this time.

>>Council requested this list also have council districts included.

Update on EMS Medicaid Non-Medical Transports

As I reported at the last meeting, Governor Sanford has enacted a program that allowed a private company to handle all non-emergency Medicaid transports. We had hoped that the legislature would address this issue; however, it appears that this will not happen as the legislation was sent to the Ways and Means Committee and they will not meet again this session. There is still a pending lawsuit but the judge has not ruled as of yet. We are continuing to receive information that nursing homes and hospitals across the state are experiencing problems with transportation for their Medicaid patients. As of this date I have not heard anything from the Association of Counties as to their intent to get involved on this issue; however, I am making contact with them to discuss this issue.

Council Questions:

>>Ben Trotter stated the City of Central has been disturbed regarding a recent letter, Mr. Trotter asked Mr. Hurst to comment.

Mr. Hurst informed Council that the City of Central mailed a letter to inform businesses within the municipality of new fees that would be in place. Mr. Hurst stated a letter had been sent out by County Administration regarding the budget information as it relates to municipal garbage. Mr. Hurst further stated this letter was a courtesy to allow the municipalities the time to implement in the event of changes. Also, the letter indicated they could contact the Solid Waste Department for specific estimates.

Mr. Hurst further informed Council the cost that the City has published to businesses is not accurate.

James London stated that perhaps Mr. Hurst could diplomatically let the elected officials know this was not the intention of the County, and the City of Central has mistaken the costs.

COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Government Day. Chairman Smith congratulated staff and the county employees for the good job with Government Day. Mr. Smith informed the public that Pickens County had its first Government Day and it was nice for the citizens to be able to go out and see the different departments of Pickens County.
2. Vision 2025 Plan- Dr. London gave Council a draft of the Vision 2025 Plan, and announced that the plan will be presented to the citizens on Tuesday, May 22, at Liberty High School cafeteria from 6 pm to 8 pm.
3. Dacusville Recreation- Tom Ponder thanked staff for the good work they did with the Dacusville Recreation Department. Mr. Ponder stated he appreciated the efforts.

MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Smith opened the floor up for new business.

1. Request regarding a Special Fire District. Randy Crenshaw moved to add to committee the request from the Cliffs for a special fire district called Springs Fire District. Motion was seconded by Ben Trotter and unanimously passed. Referred to the Justice and Public Safety Committee.
2. James London moved to add to executive session an appointment to the Economic Development Board. Motion was seconded by Tom Ponder and unanimously passed.

JULIA HOYLE WITH WORKLINK, TO PRESENT TO COUNCIL THE ANNUAL PLAN MODIFICATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, AND TO PRESENT NEW BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

Mrs. Hoyle came before Council to present the Annual Plan Modifications. Ms. Hoyle did state she was not ready for the appointments. Chairman Smith stated she could present those names at a future meeting.

>Motion was made by Jennifer Willis, seconded by James London, and unanimously passed to approve the Plan year modification.

PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 387 FY 2007/08 BUDGET:

Chairman Smith opened the Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 387.

1. Mr. John W. McKenzie, Chairman of the Library Board requested that Council consider exempting the Library System for charging \$.25 per copy and keep its copy charges at \$.15. Mr. McKenzie stated the Library's patrons are mainly students.

In addition, Mr. McKenzie requested \$60,000 to the 2007- 2008 Library System budget to accomplish the following:

- \$15,000 for the remaining three months of our six month service contract with our network installer;
- \$25,000 for a part time hardware specialist;
- \$20,000 to change the grade level of our Systems Manager (existing staff retires 6-15-07) to reflect additional responsibilities and Network skills.

With no other citizens requesting to speak, Chairman Smith closed the Public Hearing and called for a motion.

>>Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Randy Crenshaw that this constitutes second reading of Ordinance No. 387.

Vineyards Fire District---Amendment was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Jennifer Willis, and unanimously passed to increase the Vineyards Fire District as requested.

- Increase budget for health insurance from \$34,000 to \$53,143.
- Take \$39,684 from projected fund balance at June 30, 2007

Liberty Fire District—Amendment was made by Neil Smith, seconded by Ben Trotter and unanimously passed to amend the Liberty Fire District as requested.

- Amend the FY 2008 recommended budget to increase \$500,000 for a fire station

Shady Grove Fire District—Amendment was made by Randy Crenshaw, seconded by Tom Ponder and unanimously passed to amend the Shady Grove Fire District as requested.

- **Increase** budget for FY 2008 by \$15,000 for increase cost with City of Pickens (\$7,280) a lawn maintenance contract (\$5,000), Property and Liability increased cost (\$3,500)

Crosswell Fire District—Amendment was made by Tom Ponder, seconded by Jennifer Willis and unanimously passed to amend the Crosswell Fire District as requested.

- Amend FY 2008 budget **to increase** budget by \$481,567; funds will come from fund balance and capital lease: Fire truck, Pumper truck, fire station, operating supplies, personnel (3 employees if the City of Easley does not enter contract with Crosswell Fire District.

Six Mile Fire District—Amendment was made by Randy Crenshaw, seconded by Tom Ponder and unanimously passed to amend the Six Mile Fire District as requested.

- Amend FY 2008 budget **to increase** budget by \$297,695; funds will come from fund balance.
Tanker; contingency; Town of Six Mile

REQUEST FROM SHADY GROVE FIRE DISTRICT FOR ADDITIONAL \$30,000 FROM FUND BALANCE TO COMPLETE THE MEETING ROOM SPACE AT THE NEW BUILDING:

Motion was made by Tom Ponder, seconded by Randy Crenshaw, and unanimously passed to approve the additional funding.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to approve the Consent agenda as amended was made by Jennifer Willis and seconded by Tom Ponder. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

- a. Request for a quitclaim deed reference Lake Forest Sub-Division. Referred to the Public Service Committee.

- b. Request from the Cliffs for a special fire district. Referred to the Justice and Public Safety Committee. (added during motion period)

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion to convene in executive session for the stated purpose was made by Jennifer Willis, seconded by Tom Ponder, and unanimously passed.

- Appointments to Boards and Commission – Economic Development

PUBLIC SESSION RECONVENED:

Chairman Smith called the Public Session back to order and allowed the following motions.

1. **Economic Development Alliance.** Ben Trotter moved to appoint Mr. Ed Hutton, Jr. to the board to fill the unexpired term of Mendel Stewart. Motion was seconded by Tom Ponder and unanimously passed.
2. **Economic Development Alliance.** James London made the motion to re-appoint Dr. David Barkley. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Willis and unanimously passed.

ADJOURN:

With there being no further business before the Pickens County Council, motion to adjourn was made by Jennifer Willis, seconded by Tom Ponder, and unanimously passed. Council stood adjourned at 7:10 PM

**Chairman Smith informed the public that council was going to convene to the Main Conference Room for a work session.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

G. Neil Smith, Chairman