

Regular Pickens County Council Meeting  
May 4, 2015  
6:30 PM

County Council met in regular session, in the Auditorium, County Administration Facility, with Chairman Jennifer Willis presiding. Agendas, bearing date, time, and location of meeting were mailed to Council members and local news media on April 24, 2015

Council Members in attendance:

Jennifer H. Willis, Chairman  
Trey Whitehurst, Vice Chairman  
Tom Ponder, Vice Chairman Pro-Tem  
G. Neil Smith  
Randy Crenshaw  
Ensley Feemster

Staff:

Ralph Guarino, Interim Administrator  
Ken Roper, County Attorney  
Donna Owen, Clerk to Council

**WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Willis called the meeting of May 4, 2015 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Councilman Tom Ponder led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC FORUM:**

Chairman Willis called upon the Clerk to introduce the speakers for Public Forum.

- 1) Pree Hamilton-Ms. Hamilton, President of the Humane Society gave Council an update and expressed how much she appreciated the support of Council and County Staff. It was reported that an estimated \$70,000 would be forthcoming, and Council was informed that fund raisers such as the 5K had been successful.
- 2) Junius Smith- Mr. Smith informed Council of a petition signed by over 1900 citizens in Pickens County who were opposed to tax increases. Mr. Smith gave a breakdown of those numbers by each district. Mr. Smith also quoted statistical information from the last Census that the average income in Pickens County was \$22,000; the elimination of teacher salaries would bring that average to \$17,000. Mr. Smith stated the collection of taxes in Greenville County is higher due to the value of homes versus the value in Pickens County. Mr. Smith concluded by stating that Pickens County voters do not want to be compared to Greenville, and further stated the average person in Pickens cannot afford more taxes.
- 3) Rick Clark- Sheriff Clark came to Public Forum to state that he had a Jail/Justice and Mental Health Collaboration grant on the agenda of 04/06/2015. Mr. Clark stated this grant was removed from the agenda and placed in committee. Mr. Clark stated that taking this grant away has hurt the Sheriff's department, deputies, detention staff and citizens. In addition Sheriff Clark stated he felt like this grant was pulled from the agenda because of areas of his job that he must maintain for the integrity of the Sheriff's Office. Mr. Clark stated the grant would place a trained mental health specialist in the jail in order to assist in the processing of citizens who are suffering from substance abuse and other mental health disorders. It is his hope that we can find more grants and that personal feeling will not be a factor.
- 4) Philip "Rusty" Smith- Mr. Smith stated he attended the May 3, 2015 Baccalaureate at the new Liberty Civic Auditorium. Mr. Smith stated the venue is very impressive and thanked

Councilman Neil Smith for his vision in this project. Mr. Smith stated he was proud of Council for not imitating the School Board, by thinking this was over a \$15M project. Mr. Smith stated it was his understanding that for less than \$3M, the County has provided a wonderful site to generate revenue and have funding coming back into the area. Mr. Smith again thanked Councilman Neil Smith for his dedication to this project and his vision to revitalize the City of Liberty.

- 5) Weldon Clark-Mr. Clark commented on Sheriff Clark's remarks, and requested that the Sheriff should note the number of Greenville County people in the Pickens County Jail and find a way for Greenville County to reimburse Pickens County.

On another topic, Mr. Clark has been working with Planning Staff regarding the Shooting Ranges. Mr. Clark elaborated on the difference of a rifle range and pistol range. Mr. Clark stated a rifle range is more complex. Mr. Clark stated he would continue to assist on this topic and would update staff at future meetings.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Trey Whitehurst and seconded by Councilman Tom Ponder to approve the minutes of April 6, 2015 and April 20, 2015.

Chairman Willis requested an amendment to the April 6, 2015 minutes. Ms. Willis stated Mr. Tom Greene from the Keowee Springs Fire District emailed her to request that the Clerk elaborate on the information that was given to Council by Mr. Parsons, specifically the budget and personnel inequities. Vice Chairman Trey Whitehurst seconded the amendment. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

> Minutes of April 6, 2015 were approved as amended and April 20, 2015 minutes were approved as presented with a unanimous vote.

*(see addendum to the April 6, 2015 minutes)*

#### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

Interim Administrator Ralph Guarino updated Council and the Citizens of the following.

- 1) Liberty Auditorium- This project is complete with exception of owner/contractor is going to redo the sheetrock and paint in the lobby area. This will be done after the June 6, 2015 Medal of Honor ceremony.
- 2) Fire Stations on Fox Squirrel and Wilson Way- These projects are ready for the gas company to hook up the lines so the generators can be tested. The contractor will provide a complete cleanup and cleaning of the structures.
- 3) Magistrate Building-This building was cleaned this week, and the expectation is that later this week and into next week the sheetrock, insulation, painting, and flooring will progress.
- 4) Shady Grove Access Road-Staff are clearing and prepping this site for drainage infrastructure. There is rock on the Crowe Creek side, and this will slow the project to some degree. This project should be ready for pavement in (4) weeks and cost about \$75,000 for the single lane road.

>Councilman Neil Smith asked about the furniture for the new magistrates building. Mr. Guarino stated he placed \$250,000 in the budget amendment as a final projection for completion. Mr. Smith stated the furniture cost would be about \$90,000. Mr. Guarino stated while they have not narrowed down that cost yet, he thought the final cost in the amendment would cover the furniture expense, but if not, the current budget could cover said costs.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Chairman Willis opened the floor for the reports from various committees.

- 1) Education, Recreation, Health, Welfare and County Planning –Committee Chairman Whitehurst gave the following report:

The Committee of Education, Recreation, Health, Welfare, and County Planning met in the Main Conference Room on April 17, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. with all Committee Members present, and Committee Chairman Trey Whitehurst presiding. Councilman Neil Smith was also in attendance.

**Staff:**

Ralph Guarino, Interim Administrator  
 Donna Owen, Clerk to Council  
 Helen Hockwalt, Tourism Director  
 Gerald Wilson, Public Works Director

Guest: Mayor Roy Stoddard, Six Mile

The Committee met to be updated by Tourism Director Helen Hockwalt on a number of items regarding the Medal of Honor Ceremonies.

No action, Committee updated on the following:

- Date-June 6, 2015
- Status of Videos
- Video copies and Dropbox
- Overview of programs site (council assignments)
- Current budget status
- Publicity
- Design for programs
- Plans for next meeting (mid May-for video viewing)

2) Justice and Public Safety- Committee Chairman Randy Crenshaw gave the following report:

The Committee of Justice and Public Safety met in the Main Conference Room on April 20, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. All Committee Members were present with Committee Chairman Crenshaw presiding. Councilman Tom Ponder was also in attendance.

Staff:

Ralph Guarino, Interim County Administrator  
 Donna Owen, Clerk to Council  
 Billy Gibson, Pickens Rural Fire Chief

Item	Description	Referred	Report
6	Automatic Aid to Pickens Fire Department	01/20/2015	No action, Committee asked Chief Gibson to continue working with a document for Automatic Aid; and looking at support for any of the unprotected areas.
7	Place part of the Legal System Overview in the Justice and Public Safety Committee to form the committee of people who will study the project.	04/06/2016	Committee recommends asking Jeff Martin to Chair the Committee and further requesting the Sheriff, Probation and Parole Director, Behavioral Health Director, and Tom Ponder as Council to begin a core group to start the process as part of the legal system overview and needs. >During discussion Councilman Neil Smith stated the Committee of the Whole sent this to Justice and Public Safety to come up with people to work with the Committee

			<p>of the Whole. Mr. Smith asked if this is a new committee? Mr. Crenshaw stated it was a core group and this group could add more people, but all items would come back to the Committee of the Whole as far as management of the whole justice system.</p> <p>&gt;&gt;Mr. Smith amended the motion to state this core group would study the original report that came from the Jail and Justice System Assessment. Vice Chairman Trey Whitehurst gave the second.</p> <p>&gt;During discussion of the amendment, Mr. Ponder stated he did not understand where the group would go if they only looked at the original report.</p> <p>Mr. Smith stated his point is to keep the “group” overlaid with the Committee of the Whole so everyone would be working together.</p> <p>Mr. Whitehurst stated his concern is the original Justice Assessment was not to build a jail, but to look at the issues of the entire system. Further, Mr. Whitehurst asked why certain offices were not named, such as the Solicitor who is a key stakeholder.</p> <p>Mr. Ponder said the group will add those important stakeholders. Mr. Ponder also stated there is no agenda to build a jail, and the core group is designed to build a working committee. Mr. Ponder stated everything from this group would come back to the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Smith stated his amendment will not restrict adding members or a working committee.</p> <p>Chairman Willis clarified that she thinks Council is basically saying the same thing. The amendment is to specify the task, and to ensure the stakeholders from the original study are at the table.</p> <p>&gt;&gt;amendment passed 5-1 with Councilman Tom Ponder in opposition.</p> <p>Recommendation as amended passed with a unanimous vote.</p>
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3) Public Service-Committee Chairman Tom Ponder gave the following report:

The Committee of Public Service met in the Main Conference Room on April 20, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. All Committee Members were present with Committee Chairman Ponder presiding. Councilman Ensley Feemster and Chairman Willis were also in attendance.

Staff:

Ralph Guarino, Interim County Administrator  
Donna Owen, Clerk to Council

Gerald Wilson, Public Works Director  
Drew Sisco, Prison Director

Guest: Prison Ministers- Mr. Kelley and Mr. Hendricks

Log	Description	Referred	Report
21	Events/Permitting re. public roads Retained 2013 Retained 2015  First Reading 05/04/2015 <a href="#">Memo</a>  <a href="#">Permit</a>  <a href="#">Ordinance</a>	05/06/2013	Committee recommends development of permit and first reading of an ordinance for events of bicycle races and runs/walks/marathons. >>Council Approved a first reading of an ordinance for events of bikes races/runs/walks and marathons.
23	<a href="#">Prison Ministry Policy</a>	12/15/2014	Committee recommends approval of the policy changes for the prison ministry. Recommendation also included flexibility for staff to make slight changes to this policy as needed without coming back to Committee. (ex-if more volunteers were required) >>Council Approved

#### Prison Policy

All individuals or groups volunteering to serve at the Pickens County Prison are required to abide by these changes or will no longer be allowed onto the property.

1. Children under the age of seventeen, regardless of sex, will not be permitted onto prison grounds for prison ministry activities. This does not pertain to inmate visitation
2. Those wishing to volunteer will continue to complete the application process, as before, but a maximum of 75 volunteers will be approved at any given time. Once the 75 volunteers have been met those wishing to volunteer will have to wait until space is available.
3. Volunteers who are not active (have not come to the prison for a ministry event) for 60 days will be removed from the volunteer list and will have to apply again for acceptance before entering prison grounds. Volunteers who have not come within 60 days will not be permitted into the prison until they have been reinstated by re-applying.
4. No food or items of any kind are to be given to inmates by a volunteer. Any religious material a volunteer is wishing to hand out needs to be given to an officer at the time the volunteer enters the prison. No volunteer is allowed to hand any item to an inmate. When time allows the Officer will search the item and, if deemed clean of contraband, it will be handed to the specified inmate.
5. Meals provided for inmates from outside this facility will be prepared and cooked before being allowed into this facility. The prison kitchen and inmate population will no longer be used to prepare food or drinks brought in from outside the prison. An alternative meal will be provided by the prison for inmates on those days and liability from food cooked by an outside group will fall on the group preparing or supplying the food. A waiver will be signed by the approved individual, or group, wishing to provide a meal (during special events only) showing they understand that liability for food related illnesses from food they prepared falls on them.

6. ALL volunteers and items brought in will be searched thoroughly before entering the prison grounds. This may include the use of a handheld metal detector or physical pat down of a volunteer by an officer. Any volunteer refusing to allow an officer to perform a thorough search of his person or property will be removed from the prison grounds and banned from returning.

Any volunteer found in violation of these rules will be immediately removed from the prison and banned from returning. Criminal charges may be sought for anyone attempting to hand an unauthorized item to an inmate.

4) Committee of the Whole- Chairman Willis gave the following report

The Committee of the Whole met in the Main Conference Room on April 20, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. All members were in attendance with Chairman Willis presiding.

Council Members in attendance:

Jennifer H. Willis, Chairman  
Trey Whitehurst, Vice Chairman  
Tom Ponder, Vice Chairman Pro-Tem  
G. Neil Smith  
Randy Crenshaw  
Ensley Feemster

Staff:

Ralph Guarino, Interim County Administrator  
Ken Roper, County Attorney  
Donna Owen, Clerk to Council

**Log Item # 29 Fire District Review-**

Fire district review was the number one goal coming out of the 2015 Pickens County Council Planning Session.

- Committee gave staff a list of GIS requests in order to obtain an idea of existing fire districts and future needs. Committee will look at all ISO ratings.
- Committee will specifically be obtaining information about areas that are outside a 5 mile radius of fire stations.
- Next meeting will be scheduled in accordance with staff obtaining data.

5) Administration and Finance Committee-Chairman Willis gave the following report.

The Administration and Finance Committee met on Thursday April 30, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. in the Main Conference Room Pickens County Administration Facility. Chairman Willis presided with all Committee members in attendance. Also in Attendance were Councilman Crenshaw, Councilman Tom Ponder and Councilman Ensley Feemster.

**Staff:**

Ralph Guarino, Finance Director  
Tami Hall, Human Resources Director  
Donna Owen, Clerk to Council

Item	Description	Referred	Action
43	Salary Review Retained 2015	06/23/2014	No action Staff will come back to Council with adjusted minimums, and have input from department heads as it

			relates to skill set issues and competition with private sector.
59	Direct Deposit	03/02/2015	Committee Recommends that direct deposit be mandatory beginning July 1, 2015. >Council approved

### **COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:**

Chairman Willis advised the following matters.

- 1) Summer Schedule: Council will meet the third Monday for June, August and September and will not meet during the month of July.
- 2) Engaging the Audit Firm- Ms. Willis stated she will be signing the contract to engage in the outside audit.
- 3) May 21, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. is the third annual STEM celebration at the Career and Technology Center. This year Alliance Pickens will be recognizing a scholar technician from the Career Center. Ms. Willis stated a table sponsorship is \$1,000 and this is within the Administrators ability to spend without approval. Unless Council has objection, she would like to direct staff to move forward. Ms. Willis also encouraged Council to attend and show these students the support for careers and economic development.  
>Council concurred.
- 4) The Clemson Chamber has specifically asked for Helen Hockwalt to hold a seat on the Chamber Board that is specific to marketing and tourism. Ms. Willis stated she received a letter from Dr. Lisa McWhorter requesting this seat. Again this seat is specific to whomever the County has employed in that position.  
>Council concurred.
- 5) Chairman Willis stated she has requested her recreation funds be expended in the amount of \$63,000 for permanent stadium stands in the J.B. Red Owens Recreation Complex. This is a (3) way partnership with County Recreation, City of Easley, and Big League to purchase these permanent stands which are a total cost of \$207,000. This will eliminate the rental which has cost approximately \$25,000 per year for Big League to rent. This will attract other events at this complex. Ms. Willis concluded by stating this is the 15<sup>th</sup> year for the Big League World Series.

### **MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:**

Chairman Willis opened the floor for Motion Period:

- Councilman Neil Smith moved to add to the Executive Session a contractual/Economic Development issue. Motion was seconded by Councilman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed.

### **APPROVAL OF THE PRELIMINARY CERTIFICATION REGARDING SPECIAL TAX ASSESSMENT FOR REHABILITATED HISTORIC PROPERTY KNOWN AS THE EASLEY COTTON MILL:**

- Motion was made by Chairman Willis, seconded by Councilman Neil Smith and unanimously passed to approve the certification.

### **AUTHORIZING LANDSCAPE/SIGNAGE AT ALLIANCE PICKENS:**

Chairman Willis stated there were several items that were incomplete during the construction of the new economic development building. There is the back patio area, signage, and gutters, also the installation of the dishwasher.

- Motion was made by Councilman Neil Smith to authorize the Interim Administrator and Economic Development Director to expend the funds needed to complete the project, but also look at the other items such as display cases and irrigation systems. Councilman Tom Ponder seconded the motion.

>During the Council discussion, Chairman Willis stated an approximate cost of \$180,000 with 50% of those funds being held by Alliance Pickens in the private funds for the patio area. The Council would authorize matching those funds.

- Motion was unanimously passed.

**PROCLAMATION FOR PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY:**

- Motion was made by Councilman Neil Smith, seconded by Councilman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed to approve the Peace Officers Memorial Day Proclamation.

**FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO CONVEY PROPERTY KNOWN AS THE OLD LIBERTY GYM AND PRACTICE FIELD TO THE CITY OF LIBERTY:**

- Motion was made by Councilman Neil Smith, seconded by Councilman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed that this constitutes a first reading of an ordinance to convey said property.

**SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO.489 THE FISCAL YEAR 2015/2016 BUDGET ORDINANCE:**

- Motion was made by Councilman Neil Smith seconded by Vice Chairman Trey Whitehurst and unanimously passed that this constitutes a second reading of Ordinance No. 489.

**SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 490 TO AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2014/2015 BUDGET ORDINANCE:**

- Motion was made by Councilman Neil Smith seconded by Councilman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed that this constitutes a second reading of Ordinance No. 490.

**SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 488 TO AMEND THE FIFTH AMENDMENT TO THE PARK AGREEMENT AUTHORIZED BY ORDINANCE NO. 475 RELATING TO THE INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK OF OCONEE AND PICKENS COUNTIES SO AS TO AMEND THE TERM OF THE PARK FOR ITECH SOUTH, LLC PROPERTY:**

- Motion was made by Councilman Tom Ponder seconded by Councilman Neil Smith and unanimously passed that this constitutes a second reading of Ordinance No. 488.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- Motion was made by Chairman Willis, seconded by Councilman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.
  - Accommodations Tax Recommendations-Administration and Finance
  - Waste Disposal Fees-Administration and Finance
  - RFQ for Engineering and Architects-Committee of the Whole.
  - Communication and Public Relations-Committee of the Whole
  - Equipment/management- Committee of the Whole
  - Follow up plan for staff/council-Committee of the Whole
  - Long Range Plan for Economic Development – Committee of the Whole
  - Recreation/Parks/Tourism- Committee of the Whole

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Chairman Willis called for a motion to convene into executive session as defined by **S.C. Code of Laws Section 30-4-70 (a)** for the stated purposes.

Legal Issues-(1 item)



FOIA update Section 30-4-70 (a) (2)

Contractual Issues-(5 items) Section 30-4-70 (a) (2)  
(2) items for Economic Development  
Liberty TIF  
Storm-water  
Animal Control

Boards and Commissions (2 items) Section 30-4-70 (a) (1)  
Easley Central Water  
Behavioral Health

- The motion to convene into Executive Session was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster and seconded by Councilman Tom Ponder. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**PUBLIC SESSION RECONVENED:**

Chairman Willis called the Public Session back to order and stated Council discussed (5) Contractual matters as stated with no action and was briefed about a stated legal matter with no action.

Boards and Commissions:

- Motion was made by Councilman Neil Smith to appoint Larry Henderson to the Easley Central Water Board. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Trey Whitehurst and unanimously passed.
- Motion was made by Councilman Tom Ponder to re-appoint Ernie Dandeneau and Bart Turner. Also, to appoint Ms. Bety Beam to Behavioral Health Services. Motion was seconded by Councilman Neil Smith and unanimously passed.

**ADJOURN:**

Hearing no further Council business, Chairman Willis called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilman Tom Ponder, seconded by and unanimously passed. Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

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Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

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Jennifer H. Willis, Chairman