

May 7, 2007  
Regular Council Meeting  
7:00 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 2, 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  
Olivia Vassey, Research Analyst

**WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Smith called the meeting of May 7, 2007 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Tom Ponder gave the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

>>Motion was made by Jennifer Willis, seconded by Ben Trotter and unanimously passed to approve the minutes of April 23, 2007

**PUBLIC FORUM:**

Chairman Smith opened the floor for Public Forum and asked the clerk to recognize citizens for the record.

1. Martin Richey – Mr. Richey came before council to advise caution in proceeding with the Saco Lowell Project that is currently being proposed. Mr. Richey stated this project joins property that has been in his family for several generations. Mr. Richey stated the Saco Lowell property was prime property and he was in favor of development, but wanted to make sure it was development done right.
2. Karen Holland – Ms. Holland requested assistance from Council regarding trailers that are located partially on her property. Council was informed these trailers are not inhabitable and had no water or electricity; however, people were living in them. Ms. Holland gave all pertinent information to the County Administrator.
3. Weldon Clark – Mr. Clark stated his opposition to the Saco Lowell Project, and stated state highways are not the responsibility of County Taxpayers
4. Alvin Jones – Mr. Jones stated he was in favor of developing the area of Saco Lowell, but thought the existing structure could be utilized. In addition, Mr. Jones stated he was not in favor of the Multi-County Park. He did not think that was being truthful.

5. Fox Simons – Mr. Simons spoke in favor of the proposed Saco Lowell Project, and further reiterated to Council that the jobs and economic growth was an issue too important to the citizens of Pickens County.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Committee Chairman Ben Trotter gave the following report.

- Justice and Public Safety.

The Justice and Public Safety Committee met in the Main Conference Room, 4/24/07 with all members present and committee Chairman Ben Trotter presiding.

Other Council attending:  
Chairman Smith

Staff:  
Chap Hurst, County Administrator  
Lynn Fisher, Assistant County Administrator  
Donna Owen, Clerk to Council  
Olivia Vassey, Research Analyst

Item	Description	Report
3	Study issues regarding vicious animals and other matters of animal control.  Retained 12/04/2006	No action >Administrator provided the committee with a letter he had received from DNR as it relates to the coyote problem in Pickens County. Mr. Hurst stated he would obtain information for a bounty and report back.
9	Council Rules to committee for the purpose of review of protocol for placing items on the agenda	Committee recommends that during the Motion Period and New Business part of the agenda, that a council member can place an item in committee with (1) one motion. And majority will rule.  >>Council unanimously approved

Education, Recreation, Health, Welfare and County Planning—Committee Chairman, Randy Crenshaw gave the following Report:

The Education, Recreation and County Planning Committee met on Monday, May 7, 2007 at 5:00 PM with all members in attendance and Committee Chairman Randy Crenshaw presiding.

Staff:  
Chap Hurst, County Administrator  
Lynn Fisher, Assistant County Administrator  
Donna Owen, Clerk to Council  
Olivia Vassey, Research Analyst  
Scottie Ferguson, Stormwater  
Paul Masterson, Building Codes  
Chris Brink, Planning

17	Litter assessment for Pickens County. (invite law enforcement and officials that deal with litter)	Committee heard from the Sheriff's office regarding things that are being done to control litter in Pickens County; also, Mr. Hurst stated he had some ideas to improve certain high litter areas.
18	Review of the County Junkyard Ordinance.	County Staff will look at revisions to the current Junkyard Ordinance.
19	Study current requirements for residential connection to sewer  Amend Ord. No. 230 5/7/07	Committee requested a courtesy first reading to amend Ordinance No. 230. to strike the 300 ft. requirement as stated in Sec. 38-53  Council unanimously passed.

**ADMINISTRATORS REPORT:** Mr. Hurst provided memorandums to Council regarding the following; Mr. Hurst stated no action is being requested.

- ***Discussion of EMS Non-Emergency Transports***

Governor Sanford has decided to hire a medical transport service to handle all non-emergency medical calls that are reimbursed through Medicaid. This program will impact Pickens County by approximately \$200,000 per year. It does **not** impact the regular EMS emergency calls. The wheelchair ambulances that currently provide Medicaid service would be impacted, as over 2/3 of the calls are for Medicaid service. The state EMS Association is bringing a lawsuit against the Governor in order to obtain a stay until all of the ramifications of this program are reviewed. No one in the EMS business was aware of this until two days ago when it was made known at the EMS symposium. Therefore, no one in the State is prepared to deal with all of the problems that this will create. We will review our budget to remove any ambulances that were to be purchased and also to determine the status of the employees who currently hold positions, which would be impacted. The bottom line is that a lower level of service will be provided for those who can least afford it.

- ***Arial Mill Cleanup***

The County held a clean up in cooperation with the citizens of Arial Mill on April 18 and 20<sup>th</sup>. Flyers were distributed throughout the neighborhood alerting residents to place articles for disposal at the curbside. The County Solid Waste Department picked up these articles and transported them to the landfill for disposal. We collected approximately 7 tons of couches, chairs, building debris, appliances, and other items for disposal. The response from the neighborhood has been overwhelming as they truly appreciated the efforts that the County made to help them reclaim their neighborhood.

**COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:**

Chairman Smith announced Pickens County had been nominated for the Pickens Workforce Partnership Award. Mr. Smith stated this was an honor for Pickens County to be one of this year's nominees. Nominations must show a variety of partnership growth to be considered.

**MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:**

Chairman Smith opened the floor for new business, upon hearing none, Chairman Smith closed Motion Period.

**UPDATE FROM THE PICKENS COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY:**

Larry Breazeale came before the Council to give an update regarding issues the Pickens County Water Authority was working on and their priorities. Mr. Breazeale informed Council the Water Authority is working on an in-depth study about water supply and cautioned Council about allowing Atlanta Georgia, to use water from the Savannah River Basin, and further stated the Water Authority has studied the future needs of Pickens County at length.

\*\*The Clerks Office will have a detailed report from the Water Authority.

**CONSIDERATION OF A FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO CREATE A MULTI COUNTY PARK AT THE SACO LOWELL SITE:**

Chairman Smith opened the floor for a motion.

>>Jennifer Willis moved that this constitute a first reading to create a Multi-County Park at the Saco Lowell Site. Motion received a second from Randy Crenshaw.

Chairman Smith opened the floor up for Council discussion only. Chairman Smith stated that the April 23, 2007 meeting had been for State and Local officials, and tonight was a public forum for citizens, but now it was time for council. Also Mr. Smith gave a brief narrative regarding the project overview and the issues that council has dealt with to this point.

- Tom Ponder stated this project has caused some citizens and local officials to think that council is anti-development, or that Council is trying to stop this project. Tom Ponder stated his position is, and always will be the fact that Pickens County taxpayers should not be paying for work to be done on State Highways. The issues surrounding Highway 123, Highway 153, and the Prince Perry Bridge is an issue that should have been dealt with ten years ago, or certainly before development is discussed. Mr. Ponder further stated he will not be pressured into a vote he is not comfortable with.
- Ben Trotter stated he thought the project was being rushed, and he did not appreciate the pressure from the local officials or the developer. Mr. Trotter stated he would not be in favor of taxpayers working on a State Highway for the purpose of retail development.
- James London stated when this issue first came up it was a high end shopping center and was going to be a TIF District. However, by the time the project got to County Council it is now a Multi-County Park. Councilman London stated he did not think the legislation for a Multi-County Park is the correct use for retail, and would not support that tactic.

James London gave the current funding discussions:

Original request from Developer-	\$13.5 million
Proposed funding from the State-	5.0 million
Proposed funding from the Developer-	2.5 million
Proposed funding from Combined Utilities-	1.5 million
Proposed funding from the C-Fund	.5 million

James London stated this leaves a balance of \$ 4 million, which the County and City should be able to work with, however, not as a Multi County Park.

- Jennifer Willis stated she was in favor of this project and realized the issues regarding the State roads, but with the danger that Prince Perry Bridge and Highway 123 impose to the Citizens, she stated it is the responsibility of the County to embrace this opportunity. In addition, Mrs. Willis said the developer sent out invitations to all council members in December of 2006 when the project was discusses as a TIF district.
- Chairman Smith stated he appreciated all comments and dialog. Mr. Smith stated a project of this magnitude must have open discussion. He agrees that issues of transportation is the main concern, but wants it dealt with cautiously. Mr. Smith stated this is an opportunity, but it needs to be done correctly. Also Mr. Smith stated the purpose of the Multi-County Park Ordinance is to have a courtesy first reading in order to keep discussion and funding proposals on the table. Chairman Smith stated he agreed with Dr. London regarding the funding, and stated if funding proposals went through, he could see this being a City/County issue.
- Tom Ponder stated he would not support a second or a third reading as a Multi-County Park Ordinance, and again expressed concern about any tax dollars going for State responsibility.

Chairman Smith closed discussion and called for a vote on the motion for a courtesy first reading; Jennifer Willis, Tom Ponder, Randy Crenshaw, Chairman Smith and James London voted in favor, Ben Trotter opposed. Motion carried with a 5 to 1 vote.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A PROCLAMATION FOR PICKENS COUNTY GOVERNMENT DAY:**

>>Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Randy Crenshaw and unanimously passed to approve the proclamation for Government Day.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

>>Motion was made by Tom Ponder, seconded by Ben Trotter and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda as proposed.

- Contracts with municipalities and fire districts. Refer to Justice and Public Safety Committee
- Consideration of White Project request. Refer to the Administration and Finance Committee

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

>>Motion was made by Jennifer Willis, seconded by Randy Crenshaw and unanimously passed to convene in executive session for the stated purposes.

Appointments to Boards and Commission – Cultural Commission  
Contractual Issue – former Tri-County recycling site  
Personnel Issue

**PUBLIC SESSION RECONVENED:**

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

Cultural Commission- James London moved to reappoint Ellen Kochansky; motion was seconded by Tom Ponder and unanimously passed.

Chairman Smith moved to reappoint Susan Benjamin; motion was seconded by Jennifer Willis and unanimously passed.

Tri-County Recycling Site- Jennifer Willis moved to approve the bid and sale of the Tri-County property site. Motion was seconded by Randy Crenshaw and unanimously passed.

Personnel- Chairman Smith advised no action.

**ADJOURN:**

With there being no further business before the Pickens County Council, motion to adjourn was made by James London, seconded by Randy Crenshaw, and unanimously passed. Council stood adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
G. Neil Smith, Chairman