

Regular Pickens County Council Meeting  
October 20, 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 October 10, 2014.

Council Members in attendance:

G. Neil Smith, Chairman  
Tom Ponder, Vice Chairman  
Jennifer H. Willis, V.C. Pro-Tem  
Jeff Martin  
Trey Whitehurst  
Randy Crenshaw

Ken Roper, County Attorney  
Donna Owen, Clerk to Council

Staff:

Matthew L. Delk, County Administrator  
Ralph Guarino, Finance Director

**WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Smith called the meeting of October 20, 2014 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Chairman Smith further called upon Councilman Trey Whitehurst to lead 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.

- 1) Pree Hamilton-Ms. Hamilton came before Council to discuss and explore new ideas for assisting the Humane Society in Pickens County. Ms. Hamilton explained that since the Humane Society is under new management, this is an opportunity for Animal Control and the County to form a much better relationship. Ms. Hamilton passed out pictures of the Humane Society building that depicted vast improvements. Ms. Hamilton concluded by stating she would be active in pursuing funding and working to further improve this establishment.
- 2) Ted Shehan- Mr. Shehan came before Council to discuss concerns about the new fire stations, and the County not contracting with the City of Pickens. Mr. Shehan stated the new fire stations are not in the proper places for a better ISO rating than is already established with the City of Pickens. Mr. Shehan stated it was a bargain to the taxpayers for the County to continue to contract with the City. The new fire stations will increase rates, and will likely increase homeowners insurance. Mr. Shehan concluded by asking the council to consider keeping a contract with the City of Pickens and/or allowing the citizens to petition to allow their fire service to come from the City of Pickens.
- 3) Philip Smith – Mr. Smith agreed with Pree Hamilton, and stated the Humane Society was doing well under the new management. On another matter, Mr. Smith requested for the Clerk to obtain a recent Ordinance that he thought was passed in Greenville County and the City of Greenville regarding Asplundh Tree Experts. Duke Energy uses this company to trim trees away from power

lines. Mr. Smith stated this company is not esthetically pleasing, and they have done work in Pickens County as well. Mr. Smith stated the company ruined an area in Liberty to the point of devaluing property. He would like Pickens County to view the ordinances passed by Greenville County and Greenville City as it relates to this type of tree trimming.

- 4) Mayor Roy Stoddard-Mayor Stoddard thanked County Staff, especially Gerald Wilson and the Public Works staff. Mr. Stoddard stated the importance of assistance to a small town such as Six Mile that only employs (2) staff. Mayor Stoddard personally thanked Chairman Smith for his insight and wisdom of the fire district issues, as the arrangement of County fire service has worked wonderful for the Town of Six Mile. Mayor Stoddard also thanked Councilman Trey Whitehurst for being a “hands on” representative for Six Mile.
- 5) Weldon Clark- Mr. Clark stated that since 2009 the legislators have cut local funding approximately \$3M, to include the school district. Mr. Clark stated he was at a forum for school board candidates, and he informed Council that Philip Bowers is the only candidate that does not currently have income from a government entity. As the other candidates had spouses that were employed by State or Local government. Mr. Clark also pointed out that (2) of the candidates would be prohibited to vote on any budget or personnel items because it would be self serving, and therefore unethical. Mr. Clark stated these were important issues when voting for elected officials.

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

- Motion was made by Vice Chairman Tom Ponder to approve the minutes of September 15, 2014, September 22, 2014 and September 29, 2014. Motion was seconded by Councilman Trey Whitehurst. Minutes were approved. Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis and Councilman Jeff Martin excused themselves from the minutes that noted their absence.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:**

Mr. Delk informed Council and the public of the following issues. Mr. Delk took the time to focus on public safety. Mr. Delk stated each year the Emergency Management staff is nominated and recognized by municipalities for their outstanding work in the community. This is an opportunity to realize how important public safety employees are to the communities in which they serve. Mr. Delk introduced Rodney Herd, the Director of Emergency Management to name the employees that have been nominated this year.

Mr. Herd, along side of Chairman Smith gave plaques to the following staff for their service and exemplary performance in the line of duty.

- A-Shift Michael Weight
- B-Shift TJ Galloway
- C-Shift Michelle Adams

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Chairman Smith provided that the Committee of the Whole had met on September 22, 2014. The meeting was executive session to discuss contractual issues with the Aeronautics Capital Improvement Plan.

#### **COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:**

Chairman Smith informed Council of the following correspondence.

- Next council meeting is November 17, 2014
- November 22, meeting with Southern Wesleyan University to discuss a project.

- A proclamation has been signed honoring Missionary Baptist Church for their 150 years in existence.
- County Administrator Matthew Delk and the Chairman were in attendance at the South Carolina Association of Counties meeting earlier in October. There was much discussion regarding the shortfall of the Local Government Fund.

**MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:**

Chairman Smith opened the floor for new business.

- Councilman Trey Whitehurst moved to add to the agenda a resolution to request that the South Carolina General Assembly increase the allocation to the Local Government Fund. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed.

Chairman Smith stated he would add this at the end of the agenda.

**SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 482 TO DEVELOP A JOINTLY OWNED AND OPERATED INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK IN CONJUNCTION WITH OCONEE COUNTY, SUCH INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK TO BE GEOGRAPHICALLY LOCATED IN OCONEE COUNTY AND ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS 1976, SECTION 4-1-170 ET SEQ., AS AMENDED; TO PROVIDE FOR A WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH OCONEE COUNTY PROVIDING FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE PARK, THE PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE APPLICATION, AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF FEES IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAX; AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO:**

- Motion was made by Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis, seconded by Councilman Trey Whitehurst and unanimously passed that this constitutes a second reading of Ordinance No. 482 as it relates to a jointly owned and operated industrial/business park in conjunction with Oconee County.

**SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 483 AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF AN AMENDMENT TO AN EXISTING FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AND AN INDUSTRY KNOWN TO THE COUNTY AS “PROJECT GEORGE”; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO.**

- Motion was made by Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis, seconded by Vice Chairman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed that this constitutes a second reading of Ordinance No. 483 relating to the execution and delivery of an amendment to an existing fee in lieu (project George).

**SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 484 AUTHORIZING THE CONVEYANCE OF REAL PROPERTY, FORMALLY KNOWN AS THE TRI-COUNTY LANDFILL SITE, BY PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA.**

- Motion was made by Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis, seconded by Vice Chairman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed that this constitutes a second reading of Ordinance No. 484 authorizing the conveyance of real property.

**THIRD READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 481 FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF A NOT EXCEEDING SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$700,000) GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND, SERIES 2015 OF PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, TO**

**PRESCRIBE THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE PROCEEDS SHALL BE EXPENDED, TO PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT THEREOF, AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO.**

- Motion was made by Councilman Trey Whitehurst, seconded by Vice Chairman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed that this constitutes a third and final reading of Ordinance No. 481 relating to the issuance and sale of General Obligation Bond not exceeding (\$700,000).

**A RESOLUTION TO EXPRESS PICKENS COUNTY’S REQUEST THAT THE SOUTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY INCREASE THE ALLOCATION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND TO BOTH PROVIDE PROPERTY TAXPAYERS WITH THE RELIEF THEY HAVE BEEN PROMISED AND ALLOW COUNTY GOVERNMENT THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE THE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER STATE LAW:**

- Motion was made by Vice Chairman Tom Ponder, seconded by Councilman Trey Whitehurst and unanimously passed to approve the resolution relating to the allocation to the local government fund.

>>>Councilman Ponder and Whitehurst both stated for the record that the allocation for this fund is important to understand. The State mandates services that each county is required to provide. However, this fund is being cut each year and services are still expected. Chairman Smith stated Pickens County is cut \$1.6M this year. Mr. Smith stated this places a tremendous burden on the County to supplement these funds.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- Motion was made by Councilwoman Jennifer H. Willis, seconded by Vice Chairman Tom Ponder and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda as presented.
  - Memorandum of Understanding- DNR/Sassafras Mountain – Administration and Finance
  - Pickens County 150 years Celebration- Administration and Finance
  - County Plaques-Administration and Finance

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

- Motion was made by Vice Chairman Tom Ponder, seconded by Councilman Trey Whitehurst and unanimously passed to convene into executive session for the stated purposes.
  - Legal updates
  - Personnel updates
  - Contractual issues
  - Boards and Commissions

**PUBLIC SESSION RECONVENED:**

Chairman Smith called the public session back to order and advised no action as a result of discussions in closed session.

**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 Jeff Martin and unanimously passed. Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

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Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

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G. Neil Smith, Chairman