

November 7, 2011
Regular Council Meeting
6:30 PM

County Council met in regular session, in the Auditorium, County Administration Facility, with Chairman Jennifer H. Willis presiding. Agendas, bearing date, time, and location of meeting were mailed to Council members and local news media on October 28, 2011.

Council Members in attendance:

Jennifer H. Willis, Chairman
G. Neil Smith, Vice Chairman
Jeff Martin
Trey Whitehurst
Sam Wyche

Absent: Tom Ponder, Vice Chairman Pro-tem

Donna Owen, Clerk to Council

Staff:

Chappell Hurst, Administrator
Ken Roper, County Attorney

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Willis called the meeting of November 7, 2011 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Chairman Willis stated that Councilman Ponder had a death in the family and would not be present. Chairman Willis further led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairman Willis asked the Clerk to call the citizens to the podium who have requested to speak at public forum.

Margaret Thompson – Ms. Thompson complimented County Council for their hard work in economic development. Ms. Thompson referred to the media reports about Pickens County having several announcements relating to new companies or the expansion of existing industry. Ms. Thompson said she hoped this would stimulate enough growth for the property near Clemson to be turned into a multi-county park, and would not be sold.

Weldon Clark- Mr. Clark concurred that Council was doing a very good job with economic development and further stated council had a balanced budget and an upgrade in bonding capacity, when other governments were downgraded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Motion was made by Chairman Willis, seconded by Trey Whitehurst and unanimously passed to approve the minutes of October 26, 2011 Special called Council Meeting.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Hurst advised Council of the following issues.

1. The Senior Center at Pickens was closing and merging with the center in Easley. Also closing the Liberty Center and merging with Central/Clemson. Mr. Hurst stated this was due to budget constraints. However, the services would still allow Pickens and Liberty participants to be transported to the Easley center.

2. Air Quality Standards- Mr. Hurst informed Council that he received a letter from DHEC stating they are sending information to the EPA that South Carolina is in attainment, using the most recent air quality standards that show improved ozone standards. If the EPA makes any change, in this designation process, the State will be notified and meetings can ensue. Mr. Hurst stated this is good news, and he thanked the delegation in Columbia for realizing the importance of air quality attainment.
3. SB 719- Mr. Hurst stated Council should be aware of the introduction to this bill which states that 20% of total retail sales of electricity in South Carolina would come from renewable energy resources by December 21, 2022. Renewable energy would be solar, wind, and other like sources. Mr. Hurst stated this bill, as it currently reads, would do harm to existing utilities and industry. Mr. Hurst urged Council and citizens to talk to the Delegation officials to alert them to take this bill very seriously.
4. Mr. Hurst stated the Sherriff's Office had contacted him regarding concerns about the sale of synthetic drugs such as the "bath salts" that the State has declared illegal. The sheriff's office wanted to cover a variety of such drugs to be deemed illegal for sale in Pickens County. Mr. Hurst stated he would be obtaining further information on this subject, as several counties had passed resolutions regarding synthetic drugs.

>>The consensus of Council was for Mr. Hurst to move forward and inquire about the status of SB 719 from the senator and other members of the Delegation.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Chairman Willis stated no committees have met.

COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

Chairman Willis reminded Council of the following issues:

1. November 8th 2011 at 9:00 AM, Pickens County would have another economic development announcement. Mrs. Willis stated this would be held at the Tri-County Technical College, Easley Campus.
2. Chairman Willis reminded Council of a November 17, 2011 special called meeting. Chairman Willis stated this would be executive session and would begin at 5:00 PM. This meeting would be to discuss several contractual and legal items.
3. Chairman Willis stated she would be working with the Administrator to survey citizens about their thoughts on broadband internet service for Pickens County. This would be an internet survey.

MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Willis opened the floor for new business.

- Councilman Trey Whitehurst moved to place the issue regarding SB 719 to the Committee of the Whole for further discussion. Motion was seconded by Councilman Jeff Martin and unanimously passed.
- Councilman Wyche stated that regarding the old gym in Pickens, he would encourage the Chairman to have a committee meeting in order to resolve issues with this property.

REQUEST FROM THE CITY OF CENTRAL, REGARDING TIF DISTRICT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN:

- Neil Smith moved to decline this request, as well as future requests, and further moved that council would develop protocol regarding this issue. Chairman Willis seconded the motion.

Mr. Smith explained the TIF request comes before Council with a certain amount of time to deny the request; if Council does not deny the request then by default, the request is automatically imposed. Mr. Smith stated that it was important for Council to have a protocol in place as the County moves forward.

Chairman Willis stated Council had heard the motion and the explanation, and further called for the vote. All members voted in the affirmative.

PUBLIC HEARING AND THIRD READING OF ORDINANCE No. 442 TO AMEND THE AGREEMENT AUTHORIZED BY ORDINANCES NO. 384,410,424,433,437, AND 438 RELATING TO THE INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK OF OCONEE AND PICKENS COUNTIES SO AS TO ENLARGE THE PARK:

Chairman Willis opened the floor for the public hearing of Ordinance No. 442. Hearing no request to speak, the public hearing was closed.

- Motion was made by Councilman Trey Whitehurst, and seconded by Councilman Sam Wyche that this constitutes third and final reading of Ordinance No. 442.

PUBLIC HEARING AND THIRD READING OF ORDINANCE 443 AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT BETWEEN PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AND KP COMPONENTS, INC. AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, PAYMENT OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAXES RELATED TO THE PROJECT:

Chairman Willis opened the floor for the public hearing of Ordinance No. 443. Hearing no request to speak, the public hearing was closed.

- Motion was made by Councilman Jeff Martin, seconded by Councilman Trey Whitehurst and unanimously passed that this constitutes a third and final reading of Ordinance No. 443.

PUBLIC HEARING AND THIRD READING OF ORDINANCE 444 AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA (THE COUNTY) AND YH AMERICA, SC, INC. (THE “COMPANY”) AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO:

Chairman Willis opened the floor for the public hearing of Ordinance No. 444. Hearing no request to speak, the public hearing was closed.

- Motion was made by Councilman Neil Smith, seconded by Councilman Sam Wyche and unanimously passed that this constitutes a third and final reading of Ordinance No. 444.

PUBLIC HEARING AND THIRD READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 445 TO AMEND Section 24-65 OF ORDINANCE 399, FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION ORDINANCE.

Chairman Willis opened the floor for the public hearing of Ordinance No. 445. Hearing no request to speak, the public hearing was closed.

- Motion was made by Councilman Neil Smith, seconded by Councilman Jeff Martin and unanimously passed that this constitutes a third and final reading of Ordinance No. 445.

SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 449 AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT BETWEEN PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AND PROJECT ROOM.; THE GRANTING OF A SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDIT; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, PAYMENT OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAXES:

- Motion was made by Councilman Sam Wyche, seconded by Councilman Jeff Martin and unanimously passed that this constitutes second reading of Ordinance No. 449.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Committee of the whole-Birchwood Center request

Committee of the whole- SB 0719 as it relates to renewable energy. (added during motion period)

- Motion was made by Councilman Jeff Martin, seconded by Councilman Sam Wyche and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda as amended.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Chairman Willis stated there were no executive items.

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further business, Chairman Willis called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilman Jeff Martin, seconded by Councilman Neil Smith and unanimously passed. Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 6:55 PM.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

Jennifer H. Willis, Chairman