

October 1, 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, September 26, 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
Lynn Fisher, Assistant County Administrator
Ken Roper, County Attorney
Olivia Vassey, Special Projects Coordinator
Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER :

Chairman Smith called the meeting of October 1, 2007 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Councilman Crenshaw gave the invocation. Chairman Smith recognized Girl Scout Troop 387 from Dacusville who assisted with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Six Mile Fire District. Council heard from Mr. Junius Smith, Mrs. Sarah Rampey, Mr. F.M. Caddell, Ronnie Duncan, Mr. Tom Smith and Mrs. Thelma Clardy regarding the conflicts at the Six Mile Fire Department. Council specifically understood the Six Mile Fire District had stated they would like for Board Member F.M. Caddell to resign his position or the firemen may leave the district. Council also was informed that there was a September 25, 2007 meeting of the district, and during that meeting, it was presented by Councilmember Trotter, that there be a 90-day cooling off period.

- Mr. Junius Smith discussed a special called meeting of the Six Mile Fire District on September 25, 2007. Mr. Smith stated this meeting was to try to force a resignation of a board member. Mr. Smith stated the main reason the Six Mile Fire District is not happy is due to the previous Fire Board was in the process of a millage rate for all of Six Mile Fire District. However, the citizens of the Six Mile District worked hard in order to place new board members on the Board of Directors so that millage would not take place and increase taxes. Mr. Smith stated the presence of new board members have also shown that the district is poorly managed and gave examples of issues such as budget improprieties and poor management of the whole department. Mr. Smith requested that Council call the S.C. Law Enforcement Division to investigate and to also consider

a division of the fire district. Mr. Smith also called attention to the fact that elected officials were threatened at the special meeting of the fire district even though it was agreed upon that there would be a 90-day cooling off period.

- Mrs. Rampey stated she was very interested in pursuing the petition, which was signed in order to place some of Six Mile residents within the Central Fire District. Mrs. Rampey informed Council that she wants out of the Six Mile Fire District and will pursue any efforts to do so.
- Tom Smith stated he was a former board member of the Six Mile Fire District, and he thought the uniform ordinance and the by-laws were not specific enough for the individuality of each fire district. Mr. Smith also stated that the fire fees at Six Mile were a bargain at \$51.00 per household. Mr. Smith concluded by asking Council to review the ordinance.
- Ronnie Duncan stated he is the Fire Chief of the Six Mile District, and he informed Council that many false statements have been told about the Six Mile Fire District. Mr. Duncan also stated there were false statements regarding accusations about the special meeting of September 25, 2007, Mr. Duncan stated the reason why some citizens wanted out of the Six Mile Fire District had to do with issues regarding a house fire of a structure owned by Mrs. Rampey. Mr. Duncan concluded by stating he was proud of all the fireman at this district.
- Mr. F.M. Caddell, Junius Smith, and Sarah Rampey all responded to Mr. Duncan's remarks and stated he needed to resign his position, and further stated the majority of the issues were surrounding the fact that the fire district wanted large salaries, which would only be possible via a millage-operated department.
- Mrs. Thelma Clardy stated she was under the impression that the board and the firemen were supposed to take a 90-day cooling off period. She further stated she was disappointed to see that this is not taking place.

Tax Notice- Mr. Weldon Clark and Mr. Junius Smith both stated they were pleased with the tax notice explanation, which the county provided to the citizens.

Chairman Smith closed the Public Forum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Motion was made by Jennifer Willis and seconded by Ben Trotter to approve the minutes of September 17, 2007. Jennifer Willis corrected the spelling of "Junius" Smith. The minutes as amended were approved with a unanimous vote.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE:

1. Health and Wellness Policy.

Chairman Smith stated the Council had met as a Committee of the Whole to study the Health and Wellness Policy.

- Jennifer Willis moved to accept the Health and Wellness Policy.
 - Jennifer Willis made the amendment to allow a 10% weight loss to be stated as significant. Amendment was passed with a unanimous vote.

- Jennifer Willis made the amendment that if an employee is a tobacco user and is obese, that only one penalty instead of two penalties, will be the responsibility of the employee. Mrs. Willis stated she thought the existing (2) penalties was too much money, and she wanted the program to allow the employees to make lifestyle changes in a positive way. Amendment was seconded by James London and unanimously passed.

During Council discussions, Chairman Smith stated this program is not about punishment, but a 3-year period to assist all employees in a healthier lifestyle.

James London and Tom Ponder stated they would like the program to be more incentive based and hope that employees will take advantage of these opportunities.

Jennifer Willis requested that in the future there be more incentives for employees who are already leading a healthy lifestyle.

- Chairman Smith called for the vote as amended. All members voted in the affirmative, and the policy as amended was adopted.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT:

1. Fitch Rating- Council was informed that the renewed bond rating for the county is AA-. Mr. Hurst stated this was excellent for Pickens County, and attributed staff for good management. Mr. Hurst stated many counties did not retain this type of bond rating.
2. Property for an EMS Station. Mr. Hurst stated that property has been located at the intersection of Pearson and Pope Field Road for an EMS station. Mr. Hurst requested this be added to the executive session.
3. Pride Week- Council was informed that October 20-27 was national Pride Week, and Pickens County would be participating in many litter clean up projects and would be celebrating the many volunteers.
4. Waterline Easements. Mr. Hurst stated a waterline project is now resolved which involved the fact that easements had not been obtained for road right of ways. These easements are now in place and waterlines are being installed.
5. Public Hearing for School Buildings. Mr. Hurst followed up from the council meeting of 9/17/2007 regarding if the school board has to come before the Pickens County Planning Commission regarding construction of schools and other infrastructure issues. Mr. Hurst stated the Planning Commission will have a special Public Hearing for the issue of site locations.

MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:

1. Jennifer Willis moved to add to executive session the purchase of property for an EMS station. Motion was seconded by Tom Ponder and unanimously passed.
2. Chairman Smith moved to add to executive session an Economic Development project update. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Willis and unanimously passed.
3. Tom Ponder moved to add to executive session a personnel issue as it relates to the Fire District of Six Mile.

Hearing no further business for Motion Period, Chairman Smith closed the floor.

Council Correspondence.

1. Fire Department Issues. Randy Crenshaw stated to the firefighters that he does not want them to become involved in what is a political and personality conflict. Mr. Crenshaw informed the firemen that he was grateful for their service, and said for them to continue to provide the service in which they were trained to provide.

2. The Dacusville Girl Scouts. Tom Ponder and Chairman Smith thanked the Girl Scout Troop from Dacusville for their participation, and stated they hoped they had learned something about the way government works and debates certain issues.

SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO APPROVE THE FINANCING OF THE IMPROVEMENT, CONSTRUCTION, AND EQUIPPING OF CERTAIN SEWER TREATMENT FACILITIES IN PICKENS COUNTY SOUTH CAROLINA THROUGH THE BORROWING OF NOT EXCEEDING THREE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$3,550,000) FROM THE STATE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL REVOLVING FUND:

- Motion was made by Tom Ponder, seconded by James London and unanimously passed that this constitutes a second reading of an ordinance to finance the sewer treatment facilities.

THIRD READING AND PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCE NO. 394 RELATING TO THE OLD BRUNSWICK YARN MANUFACTURING FACILITY, DECLARING IT ELIGIBLE FOR THE PROPERTY TAX CREDIT PROVIDED IN THE TEXTILES COMMUNITIES REVITALIZATION ACT:

Chairman Smith called the Public Hearing to order and asked if any citizen wanted to speak regarding this issue. Hearing none, the Public Hearing was closed.

Tom Ponder moved, seconded by Ben Trotter that this constitutes third reading of Ordinance No. 394.

....During discussion, Tom Ponder stated this type of ordinance is a State mandate that forces the county to allow these tax credits, but makes the county vote and pass said ordinance. Mr. Ponder stated he had issues with these mandates. Mr. Trotter stated his concern with this ordinance is that State Law allows that the companies make application before they refurbish. Mr. Trotter stated in both cases involving the county, the businesses were already in operation.

- Chairman Smith called for the vote, James London, Jennifer Willis, and Ben Trotter opposed. Chairman Smith, Tom Ponder and Randy Crenshaw voted in favor. The motion for third reading failed.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 07-06 TO PROVIDE FOR PICKENS COUNTY TO BE REIMBURSED FOR CERTAIN ACQUISITIONS OF EQUIPMENT WITH THE PROCEEDS OF TAX-EXEMPT OBLIGATIONS:

- Motion was made by Tom Ponder, seconded by Randy Crenshaw and unanimously passed to approve Resolution No. 07-06.

APPROVAL OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

- Motion was made by Ben Trotter and seconded by James London to approve the Comprehensive Economic Development plan.
- Jennifer Willis amended the plan to include the Pickens County Project page. James London seconded the amendment.

- Jennifer Willis amended the plan to include Prince Perry Bridge, Chairman Smith seconded the amendment.

Chairman Smith called for approval as amended. Motion as amended carried with a unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF BID FOR CATEECHEE PROJECT

- Motion was made by Tom Ponder, seconded by Randy Crenshaw and unanimously passed to approve the bid for the Cateechee Village WWTF Upgrade to Kris Mechanical in the amount of \$753,500.

Chairman Smith noted the County has a \$500,000 CDBG grant, and a \$166,240 Budget and Control Grant, and a Competitive Grant of \$150,000 with a \$50,000 County match, which totals \$866,250 for this project.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Motion was made by Jennifer Willis, seconded by Ben Trotter, and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda.

a. Refer to the Administration and Finance Committee County Investment Policy.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- Motion was made by Tom Ponder and seconded by Ben Trotter to convene in executive session for the stated purposes as amended. All Council voted in the affirmative and motion carried.

- Appointments to Boards and Commission-Library, Water Authority and Stormwater appeals
- Purchase of property for EMS Station
- Personnel
- Economic Development

PUBLIC SESSION RECONVENED:

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

- Pickens County Water Authority - Jennifer Willis moved to reappoint Lynn Breazeale, George W. Teat, and William H. Smith, Jr. to the Water Authority. Motion was seconded by Tom Ponder and unanimously passed.
- Library Board Appointment – Neil Smith moved to appoint Mrs. Anne Hendricks to the Library Board. Motion was seconded by Ben Trotter and unanimously passed.
- Appointment of a Stormwater Appeals Board – Chairman Smith stated that council would begin to consider members for this board and report back at a later time.
- Property for EMS station – Motion was made by Jennifer Willis and seconded by Tom Ponder to authorize the purchase of property at Pearson and Pope Field Road. Motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Smith stated no action regarding the issue of economic development or the personnel issue in the fire district.

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further business, Chairman Smith called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Jennifer Willis, seconded by James London and unanimously passed. Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

G. Neil Smith, Chairman