

Regular Pickens County Council Meeting

October 3, 2022

6:30 PM

County Council met in regular session, in the Auditorium of the County Administration Facility, with Chairman Chris Bowers presiding. Final agendas, bearing date, time, and location of meeting were mailed to members of council and local news media on September 8, 2022

Council Members in Attendance:

Chris Bowers, Chairman

Roy Costner, Vice Chairman

Trey Whitehurst, Vice Chairman Pro-Tem

Alex Saitta

Ensley Feemster

Henry Wilson

Staff in Attendance:

Ken Roper, County Administrator

Les Hendricks, Contract Attorney

Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Chris Bowers called the meeting of October 3, 2022 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Chairman Chris Bowers led the Invocation and Veteran Randy Van Dusen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Bowers presented Veteran Dusen with a Certification of Honor and thanked him for his service.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairman Chris Bowers opened the Public Forum and requested the Clerk to call upon the citizens signed up to speak.

1. Vickie Perez: Ms. Perez addressed Council regarding the Highway 11 Ordinance.
2. Steve Anderson: Mr. Anderson addressed Council regarding the Highway 11 Ordinance.
3. Elizabeth Meyers: Mr. Meyers addressed Council regarding the Highway 11 Ordinance.
4. Karen Martinez: Ms. Martinez addressed Council regarding the Highway 11 Ordinance.
5. Joel Smith: Mr. Smith addressed Council regarding the Highway 11 Ordinance.
6. Colleen Schumer: Ms. Schumer addressed Council regarding Highway 11 Ordinance and the Beautification Committee.
7. Charles Monroe: Mr. Monroe addressed Council regarding the Highway 11 Ordinance.

8. Josh Martin: Mr. Martin addressed Council regarding the Library.
9. Brittany Arsinega: Ms. Arsinega addressed Council regarding the Library.
 - Councilman Henry Wilson made a motion to allow Rick Synakowski to speak for Brad White. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner and carried unanimously (6-0).
10. Rick Synakowski: Mr. Synakowski stepped in for Brad White, who was originally signed up to speak but had to leave early due to an emergency. Mr. Synakowski gave information on Brad White who is running for District 1 seat on County Council.
11. Linden Ellenburg: Mr. Ellenburg addressed Council regarding Highway 11 Ordinance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Chris Bowers called for a motion to approve the following minutes as presented:

- September 12, 2022 Regular-Called Council Meeting
- Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, and seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta. Seeing no other discussion, the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:

Mr. Roper addressed Council on the following:

- Operation Green Light – Shine a Light of Hope and Support for Veterans
 - Veteran Specific Job Fair Coming Soon
- Solid Waste Update – New Shredder
- Update on Hagood Mill Bridge Replacement
- Tax Notices

Council asked Mr. Roper questions that included, but was not limited to:

- PTI Litter Pickup Information (*as mentioned in Public Forum*)
- Pickens Proud Litter initiative funding (*as mentioned in Public Forum*)
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COMMITTEE REPORT:

Committee of the Whole:

PROVISION OF COUNTY EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS FOR UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR – Log No. 191

- Travis Smith, Stuart Bedenbaugh and Kimberly Perry, with McGriff, were present at the meeting.
- Council, County Staff and McGriff Staff had discussion that included, but was not limited to:
 - McGriff Staff did a very informative review of Fully Insured and Self-Funded Arrangements – with a renewal on January 1, 2023
 - Discussion on Fully Insured vs. Self-Insured
 - Third Party Administrator Discussion
 - Pharmaceuticals
 - Rebates – Self-Insured
 - Primary Care, Urgent Care, etc. for Self-Insured
 - Procurement Process for Pickens County

Minutes for October 3, 2022 Pickens County Council Meeting

- After much more discussion, Councilman Henry Wilson made a motion to pursue the fully-insured process as initially stated and see what final opportunities can be resolved in a negotiation process with our broker. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster. The motion carried (4-2), with Councilman Alex Saitta and Councilman Trey Whitehurst opposed.
- ❖ **Councilman Henry Wilson made a motion to pursue the fully-insured process as initially stated and see what final opportunities can be resolved in a negotiation process with our broker. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster. The motion carried (4-2), with Councilman Alex Saitta and Councilman Trey Whitehurst opposed.**

Council Action on Log No. 191 - Councilman Henry Wilson made a motion to pursue the fully-insured process as initially stated and see what final opportunities can be resolved in a negotiation process with our broker. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster. The motion carried (4-2), with Councilman Alex Saitta and Councilman Trey Whitehurst opposed.

Chairman Chris Bowers stated this does not need a second motion as it comes as a recommendation from the Committee. Chairman Bowers asked if there was any discussion.

Vice Chairman Roy Costner stated he believes we should go towards becoming self-insured. He asked for Council's thoughts but he is of the opinion that we still should move forward going self-insured to save money.

Councilman Trey Whitehurst went into discussion, stating we need to make a real effort to get a broker who specializes in getting people to self-insured. He stated Council has the ability to change the contract and broker at any time – you have to give a 30-day notification.

Vice Chairman Roy Costner made a motion to amend the recommendation from Committee, stating to pursue a fully-insured process as the original motion states, and add “to instruct the Administrator to work towards hiring a broker who specializes in self-insured.” Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster. The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

After much more discussion between Council, the motion, as amended, carried unanimously (6-0).

AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS AND LIMITATIONS ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ON THE SOUTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY 11 SCENIC BYWAY AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO– Log No. 205

- The Committee had very detailed discussion on this Ordinance. Discussion was included but was not limited to:
 - 2014 Design Guidelines Information for Cherokee Foothills National Scenic Byway
 - Appalachian Council of Government Highway 11 Corridor Study
 - Personal Property Rights
 - Shoulder and View sheds of the Highway
 - Buffer
 - Economic Impact
 - Some Items that Council would like to see changed in Ordinance:
 - Land Bank

- Best Practices on Buffer
 - No Industrial
 - Hwy 11 in Pickens County to North Carolina Line + 2 Miles
 - Commercials at Intersections
 - Guidelines for Commercials behind the Buffer
- After much discussion between Council & Staff, Councilman Trey Whitehurst made a motion for this item to stay in Committee and for Staff to bring back the proposed changes in the Ordinance to Council. Motion was seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson and carried (5-1), with Councilman Alex Saitta opposed.
 - ❖ **Councilman Trey Whitehurst made a motion for this item to stay in Committee and for Staff to bring back the proposed changes in the Ordinance to Council. Motion was seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson and carried (5-1), with Councilman Alex Saitta opposed.**

Council Action on Log No. 205 - Councilman Trey Whitehurst made a motion for this item to stay in Committee and for Staff to bring back the proposed changes in the Ordinance to Council. Motion was seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson and carried (5-1), with Councilman Alex Saitta opposed.

No second is required as this comes as a recommendation from the Committee.

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further Committee business, Chairman Chris Bowers called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilman Trey Whitehurst, seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson and carried unanimously (6-0). Meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

Chairman Chris Bowers announced the following:

- The Committee of the Whole meeting will take place on Monday, October 17, at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Conference Room of the Administration Facility.
- The next Council Meeting will be held on Monday, November 7, 2022 at 6:30 PM in Council Chambers of the Administration Building.

Chairman Bowers called for other council correspondence. Seeing no other correspondence, Chairman Bowers announced moving to Motion Period and New Business.

MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Chris Bowers opened the floor for motion period and new business.

Vice Chairman Roy Costner made a motion to add “Pinnacle Performer Program” Discussion to tonight’s agenda. Motion was seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson and carried unanimously (6-0).

Seeing no discussion, Chairman Bowers closed the floor.

8. REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REC ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR:

- a) AIRPORT PLAYGROUND ADDITIONAL AMENITIES**
- b) PICKENS COUNTY ADMINISTRATION WALKING TRAIL**
- c) MILE CREEK PARK DAY USE PICNIC AREA IMPROVEMENTS**
- d) HAGOOD MILL FOUNDATION** (*updated information requested by Council*)

Airport Playground Additional Amenities

Vice Chairman Costner stated he read through the application/recommendation and he understands the concern on pinch points with the particular swing but we did have a lot of conversation about putting swings at the playground. He stated he would like for us to submit an application for a request for a disabled capable swing set.

Mr. Roper stated he will take this information back to staff to work on some alternatives.

Pickens County Administration Walking Trail

- After some discussion on the walking trail, Councilman Henry Wilson made a motion to fund \$3,000 out of District 6 funding, and \$7,000 out of District 3 funding, for the Pickens County Administration Walking Trail. Motion was seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).

Mile Creek Park Day Use Picnic Area Improvements

- After some discussion on the Mile Creek Park Picnic Area, Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to fund 10% out of District 5 funding (\$1,900), 10% out of District 6 funding (\$1,900), and the remainder of funds out of District 2 funding (\$15,200). Motion was seconded by Councilman Trey Whitehurst and carried unanimously (6-0).

Hagood Mill Foundation

Councilman Alex Saitta stated he made a motion last year for the County to pay for half of the cost for the bathroom at Hagood Mill and he believes the county general fund should pay that rather than the recreation funds because that was the motion that was made.

Mr. Roper stated the agreement was that the county would fix the underlying drainage issue, which we have done, and then we would split the cost of the floor. The general fund would be where we would pay for it from unless Council directed us otherwise. He stated they are waiting on an invoice from Hagood Mill so they can pay half of it.

- ❖ Councilman Alex Saitta made a motion to accept the recommendation, but instead of the \$4,000 coming out of the recreation funding, it should come out of the general fund as stated in the original motion made last year. The motion was seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson. Chairman Bowers asked if there was any discussion.
 - Chairman Bowers stated if Council made this motion last year to pay for half out of general fund, so this motion is not needed, unless Councilman Saitta wants to make the motion for clarity.
 - After more discussion regarding Hagood Mill, Councilman Alex Saitta tabled the motion for the application to go through the Recreation Committee. Councilman Henry Wilson agreed with the motion. Councilman Saitta withdrew his original motion.

9. REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ATAX COMMITTEE FOR:

a) MILE CREEK PARK CAMPGROUND REPAIRS AND NATURE TRAIL

b) CLEMSON PADDLE JAM (*updated information requested by Council*)

Mile Creek Park Campground Repairs and Nature Trail

Council and Staff review the ATAX Application and Recommendations for the Campground Repairs and Nature Trail at Mile Creek Park.

Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to approve \$46,000 of ATAX funding to go towards the Mile Creek Park Campground and Nature Trail. Motion was seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson and carried unanimously (6-0).

Clemson Paddle Jam

Council did not move to vote on any funding for Clemson Paddle Jam at this meeting.

UPDATE FROM THE LIBRARY BOARD AND LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Stephanie Howard, Library Director, had detailed discussion that included, but was not limited to:

- ❖ PCLS Connect
 - (Play. Connect. Learn. Share.)
 - Connecting the Community beyond the physical branches
 - Pick up of PCLS materials
 - Check out of Wi-Fi hotspots
 - Children’s programming
 - Authors, History presentations
- ❖ PCLS Digital Archives Lab
 - Discovering, recording, protecting and providing access to Pickens County History
 - Audit & organize what we have
 - Create policies, & forms, protect collection
 - Assess needs (now and future)
 - Doing this as new items are donated
- ❖ Library Spaces
 - Amazing programing and opportunity to reserve community spaces
 - Room Reservations for 4th Quarter FY 22 (April-June, 2022): 2,200
 - Programs for 4th Quarter FY 2022: 667
 - Total Room Reservations and Programs for 4th Quarter FY 2022: 2,867

CONSIDERATION OF A BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR THE REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS OFFICE

Chairman Bowers stated there were new election machines coming to Pickens County from the state, and the one thing the county was going to be responsible for, in order for us to receive these machines, was going to be the service contract for these machines. Council did vote to move forward at the time, but due to the process of the Elections office changeover, it did not make it to the budget this year to be approved. It is a \$14,000 service contract.

After more discussion Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to approve the \$14,000 service contract for the Elections Budget. Councilman Henry Wilson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously (6-0).

CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2022-26 RECOGNIZING OCTOBER AS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to consider Resolution 2022-26.

- Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner and carried unanimously (6-0).

CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2022-27 DECLARING OCTOBER 2022 AS FIRST RESPONDER MONTH IN PICKENS COUNTY

Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to consider Resolution 2022-27.

- Motion was made by Vice Chairman Roy Costner, seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster and carried unanimously (6-0).

THIRD READING OF AN ORDINANCE No. 619 THAT PROVIDES FOR STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES FOR DEVOLVING SURPLUS COUNTY REAL PROPERTY RELATED TO THE MORE ACCURATE AND EFFICIENT OPERATION OF THE COUNTY ROAD SYSTEM.

Chairman Chris Bowers asked for a motion to constitute third reading of Ordinance 619.

- Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, and seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner. Chairman Bowers asked if there was any discussion.
 - Councilman Alex Saitta explained while he will be voting against this ordinance.
 - Mr. Roper went into discussion on what this Ordinance is intended for.
- The motion carried (5-1), with Councilman Alex Saitta opposed.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. County Constables & Certification Processes – *Committee of the Whole*

- Councilman Alex Saitta made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilman Henry Wilson seconded the Motion and carried unanimously (6-0).

PINNACLE PERFORMER PROGRAM *(as added during Motion Period and New Business)*

Vice Chairman Roy Costner stated we originally designed this program to recognize those employees that are part of the County and doing something exemplary. He stated a second component of this program, when we originally created it, was to have a “citizen type award” that still follows the same guidelines. Vice Chairman Costner asked if this would be something where we nominate someone in Executive Session.

Mr. Roper stated he does not have any standard for a citizen area without Council giving him that standard.

Vice Chairman Roy Costner made a motion to add “Pinnacle Performer Program” to Executive Session at the November Council Meeting. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster and carried unanimously (6-0).

EXECUTIVE SESSION: S.C. Code of Laws, Section 30-4-70 (a):

Chairman Chris Bowers called for a motion to convene into Executive Session as defined by S.C. Code of Laws, Section 30-4-70 (a). Chairman Bowers further stated that each issue would be discussed as the Law provides.

Boards and Commissions – Section 30-4-70 (a) (1)

- Beautification Committee

Economic Development – Section 30-4-70 (a) (5)

- Project Farmhouse
 - Project Smaller Dog
- Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, seconded by Councilman Trey Whitehurst and carried unanimously (6-0), to convene in executive session for the stated purposes after a five-minute recess.

ACTION AS NEEDED VIA EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:

Chairman Chris Bowers called the Public Session back to Order and advised the following:

Boards and Commissions – Section 30-4-70 (a) (1)

- Beautification Committee – **No Action Taken**

Economic Development – Section 30-4-70 (a) (5)

- Project Farmhouse – **Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to authorize moving forward with presented information on option 1 for Project Farmhouse. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner and carried (5-1), with Councilman Alex Saitta opposed.**
- Project Smaller Dog – **No Action Taken**

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further Council business, Chairman Chris Bowers called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson and carried unanimously (6-0). Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council

Chris Bowers, Chairman of County Council