

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL AS A WHOLE REPORT

Council Members:

Roy Costner, Chairman
Chris Bowers, Vice Chairman
Wes Hendricks, Vice Chairman Pro-Tem
Carl Hudson
Trey Whitehurst
Ensley Feemster

Staff in Attendance:

Ken Roper, County Administrator
Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council
Billy Gibson, Emergency Services Director

The Committee of the Whole met in the Main Conference Room, at the Pickens County Administration Facility, on Monday, August 17, 2020. All members of the committee were in attendance, with Chairman Roy Costner presiding.

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Roy Costner called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order. Councilman Trey Whitehurst led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE:

Chairman Roy Costner stated the meeting will begin with *Log No. 154 – AN ORDINANCE NO. 586 TO AMEND THE ALLIANCE PICKENS ORDINANCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF ALLOWING LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF SMALL BUSINESS ON THE BOARD ACCORDING TO SECTION 30-35.*

AN ORDINANCE NO. 586 TO AMEND THE ALLIANCE PICKENS ORDINANCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF ALLOWING LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF SMALL BUSINESS ON THE BOARD ACCORDING TO SECTION 30-35 – Log No. 154

- Mr. Roper stated Council amended this Ordinance during second reading to say “allowing local representative of small business on the board.” Mr. Roper stated that Council has in front of them what the ordinance would actually look like. He stated he needs information from Council on how they would like to amend this ordinance. He stated under 30-35-A, you will see how the board is laid out now.
- Chairman Costner stated he thinks we are getting too far on defining what small business is.
- Vice Chairman Bowers stated we have an insurance agent on the board, which means small business.
- Mr. Roper stated that Mr. Farley mentioned the same thing that an insurance agent is on the board and that falls under small business.
- Councilman Whitehurst stated we appoint these board members and we can make that decision before appointing if it defines small business.
- Vice Chairman Bowers referred to the Ordinance in Section 3 in 30-35-A, quoting “Two Members representing Higher Education (ex-officio), which is the President of Clemson University (or appointee) and the President of Tri-County Technical College (or appointee).” Vice Chairman Bowers stated he was reading over this and we have other colleges in our county, such as Southern Wesleyan University, and we have the School District of Pickens County as well. He stated he is curious why these two colleges are the only colleges considered on these seats.
- Mr. Roper stated that predates him, in 2004. He stated he is unsure why it was set up this way.
- Councilman Whitehurst stated he likes the idea of having “a representative of higher education” and Council decides who fills these seats.
 - Councilman Whitehurst made a motion to change Section 3-A to read “a member

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representing from Higher Education”, as opposed to “President of Clemson University (or appointee). Motion was seconded by Chairman Roy Costner. Chairman Costner asked if there was any other discussion.

- Councilman Wes Hendricks stated these two universities are state supported and might have something to do regarding why these two schools were in the original ordinance.
- After some discussion, Chairman Costner stated we still need a motion to add a small business seat, if that is something Council would like to do.
- Vice Chairman Bowers quoted section A of the ordinance, stating “The affairs of the alliance shall be managed by a 13-member board of directors, which shall be composed of seven members representing the public sector and six members representing the private sector. There shall also be two nonvoting ex-officio members representing higher education facilities.” He stated could we not add the School District of Pickens County as an ex-officio non-voting member.
- Mr. Roper stated the language would be higher/secondary education.
- Councilman Whitehurst stated he would like to leave the small business seat out and only change the two members representing higher education. He stated that way, we have some flexibility.
- After more discussion, Councilman Whitehurst amended his motion to read “two members from the education community, as an ex-officio non-voting member).” Chairman Costner seconded the amended motion and the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

❖ **Councilman Whitehurst made a motion for Section 30-35-3A to be two members from the education community (ex-officio and non-voting) and to move out of the Committee for third reading. Chairman Costner seconded the motion and the motion was carried unanimously (6-0).**

DISCUSSION ON OLD JAIL – Log No. 142

- Mr. Roper stated Reverend Moss will be updating Council on the progress he has made on his idea for the old stockade. He stated this topic, as well as many other things, got pushed to the side at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and this has been well on his heart. Mr. Roper presented Council with photos of the stockade, which included the outside views, inside the stockade, the bathrooms, the beds/lockers in the two dorms, the kitchen and the dining hall. He stated this is not what we would call a fancy building, but it is still being maintained. He stated he would like to know what Council’s vision is for this big facility.
- Reverend Moss and the two other board members with him thanked Council for allowing them to come speak. He stated Rev. Moss has given the vision he has, and he has worked extensively with those who have been a part of this facility. He stated the question is what we do to help or show that they are being rehabilitated. He stated we hope this can be a transformation facility to move from one type of facility to a change of heart is something that takes time. He stated they are willing to help in this effort and we both have successful ministries and we know the change of heart is the only way a person can live a productive life. He stated members of the community are here to help and assist in any way they can.
- Councilman Hudson asked Rev. Moss if this will only be for people who need help coming out of the detention center.
- Rev. Moss stated that is correct.
- Councilman Hudson asked if he was still involved with the Detention Center.
- Rev. Moss stated not at this point, since they moved into the new facilities. He stated they are sending Mother’s Day, Father’s Day and Christmas Cards.
- Councilman Hudson asked if this was mostly because of COVID-19.
- Rev. Moss stated he will let the Sheriff answer that.
- Councilman Hudson stated for this facility, you probably need to identify people coming through the

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detention center to have communication with people who do not have a place to go after jail time or a family to help them. He stated if they needed a place to go, this is where he is talking about this facility.

- Rev. Moss stated yes, it will be a six month program.
 - Councilman Hendricks asked if Rev. Moss has written the curriculum yet.
 - Rev. Moss stated they are working on it, but wanted to see where they stand with Council.
 - Councilman Hendricks asked if there would be a plan to drug screen.
 - Rev. Moss stated yes, absolutely.
 - Chairman Costner stated he sees this as a huge opportunity. He stated he would love to see something like this happen. He asked if Rev. Moss was just looking to see how to move forward and see what type of funding can be offered.
 - Councilman Whitehurst stated he believes we should do this partnership just like the partnership done with Clemson Paw Partners. He stated what we have done there, is give them a facility to lease and they are raising money to build the clinic. He stated we would require an accountability report to make sure they are on track financially and with their programs since it is county property. He asked Rev. Moss what they are looking for.
 - Rev. Moss stated they are looking for the facility.
 - Vice Chairman Chris Bowers stated we have already had this conversation, and he was very excited and supportive of this program. He stated these gentlemen are starting from the ground up and asked Mr. Roper how we can help Rev. Moss with what the structure needs to look like.
 - Mr. Roper stated they understand the structure; the issue is for example, talking about human safety vs. an animal facility. He stated the comparison is right, but what we need to do here is have a Memorandum of Understanding. He stated the idea of a MOU is listing what we need to get done before we can lease. He stated we need a temporary working agreement to where they can meet the working requirements and then we can do a lease.
 - Councilman Feemster stated he would like to see Rev. Moss present a plan to Mr. Roper and go from there.
 - Councilman Whitehurst stated we need to give them what we need, as far as what we expect and we know that there are certain things that have to be expected. He stated in the Memorandum of Understanding, it should list out everything that they need to do before we consider. He stated there are certain guidelines and regulations that have to be followed.
 - After more discussion, Mr. Roper recommended Council to direct staff to implement a Memorandum of Understanding that lays out the plan for how they would qualify to lease a County facility.
 - Vice Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to implement a Memorandum of Understanding, laying out a plan on how Reverend Moss will implement the facility. Motion was seconded Councilman Whitehurst. Chairman Costner asked if there was any discussion.
 - Councilman Whitehurst asked if this was enough for Rev. Moss to move forward in his next steps of making this plan work.
 - Rev. Moss stated it is enough and they can move forward with what they need to get done.
 - Vice Chairman Bowers asked if we could get an update at the September 14th council meeting.
 - Mr. Roper stated yes.
 - Seeing no other discussion, motion carried unanimously (6-0).
- ❖ **Vice Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to implement a Memorandum of Understanding, laying out a plan on how Reverend Moss will implement the facility. Motion was seconded Councilman Whitehurst and carried unanimously (6-0).**

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EMERGENCY SERVICES STRUCTURE – Log No. 151

- Mr. Roper stated that Billy Gibson, Director of Emergency Services, is here this evening to answer any questions Council may have.
 - Mr. Roper stated that Council has a handout at their seat of the fee structure for the fire districts, and only the fee districts. He stated this shows the fees in the different districts.
 - Chairman Costner presented to Council his suggestions for the fire fee structure. He went into discussion on his suggestions from his handout.
 - Mr. Gibson stated the system does need updating. He stated the graduated fee schedule that is being proposed just makes sense. He stated our commercial schedule is all over the place and he believes there is a merit to this and he would like to see Council move forward. He stated this will give us a more uniform structure.
 - Councilman Hendricks asked if the commercial rate will interfere with FILOT's or any agreements with other businesses.
 - Mr. Roper stated those fees are individually negotiated and he will have to look into those agreements.
 - Councilman Hudson asked what would be Mr. Gibson's plan to get this information out to the public if we decided to do this.
 - Council had limited discussion to:
 - Industrial Fee Structure
 - Educating the Community on this new structure
 - Mr. Roper stated the next step would be First Reading In Title Only. Mr. Roper stated he has seen Mr. Gibson's proposal. He stated the hard part of this will be communicating the changes with the public to make sure they buy in on why we are doing these changes. He stated the actual implementation will be something the assessor's office will do.
 - Vice Chairman Bowers stated this will be big communication and he sees more upset-ness. He asked how we are going to communicate with these businesses that will have a tremendous jump in fees.
 - Councilman Hudson stated the people who are paying the bill need to understand and buy into this. He stated he has talked to people in his district.
 - Chairman Costner stated he agrees. He stated he wants to go off of the square footage of the homes to create a more structured plan.
 - Mr. Roper stated the legal requirements will be three readings and a public hearing.
 - Councilman Whitehurst stated we want to communicate with the public and staff to make sure everyone is aware of this change. He stated Mr. Gibson will need to get with his Fire Chiefs to get the word out.
 - After much more discussion, Vice Chairman Bowers stated he would like to make a motion that we push this out of Committee for First Reading in Title only, then it be recommitted back to the Committee. Chairman Costner seconded the motion. Chairman Costner asked if there was any discussion. Seeing none, motion carried unanimously (6-0).
- ❖ **Vice Chairman Bowers stated he would like to make a motion that we push this out of Committee for First Reading in Title only, then it be recommitted back to the Committee. Chairman Costner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

COVID-19 UPDATE – Log No. 148

- Chairman Costner stated he asked for this to be on the agenda for this evening's meeting. He stated he recently received a phone call, from a gentleman who has COVID-19. His wife, his daughter, and his adopted son also all have COVID-19. He stated the gentleman and his family had been in quarantine for a few days and

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they have not gone anywhere. Chairman Costner stated the gentleman ended up getting pneumonia, and needed a nebulizer. He stated this man had COVID-19 and could not get a nebulizer anywhere but Publix, who did not have a drive-through pharmacy. He stated the man called Publix, asking if an employee could come outside to get his medical info/credit card to pay for the nebulizer so he would not have to come in the store. Chairman Costner stated they were not able to do that due to liability reasons, and the man's wife, who wore a mask, ended up having to go inside Publix to pick up the nebulizer herself so they could start getting the treatment they needed. Chairman Costner stated Council has said a million times that we have money in the general fund that we are saving for a rainy day. He stated he believes we need to reinstate our "at risk task force" to where when families, or people, can call a number to where we can go pick up stuff for them if needed. He asked Mr. Roper how much it would cost to use existing personnel like the at risk task force.

- Mr. Roper stated what he is describing would not cost anything to stand up, but once usage becomes widespread, it will grow. He stated we have the connections with the community to do this.
- Chairman Costner stated he believes Pickens County is very prideful and humble and we care. He stated he would like to use the staff we have, and figure out a number we can set aside to help.
- Vice Chairman Bowers stated he understands the concern. He stated he has concerns about using our staff to do these things. He stated for example, if we use firemen to do this, we have to have firemen to respond to fire calls. He also stated this will put the employee at risk, being around a COVID-19 positive patient. He stated there is an argument about limiting what resources you use to make sure you are safe. Vice Chairman Bowers stated he agrees that Pickens County is a very prideful place but he personally makes a donation to United Way every month and he questions what resources United Way have for a problem like this. Vice Chairman Bowers also stated that Publix has a Pharmacy Delivery program. He stated the first step is can Pickens County be the hub, and when we identify that we cannot find a public sector/partner to help, we can look into it then.
- Chairman Costner stated his point is the government is here to serve the people. He stated he believes this is the best way we can serve the people of Pickens County by being a hub. He stated that he believes we should take money from the general fund, hire someone, give them an allowance to if they need help, etc.
- Councilman Feemster stated many churches have an emergency ministry section that will pay for different things for people.
- After more discussion, Vice Chairman Bowers stated if it truly came down to an emergency situation where staff had to have the money right that minute, there are two options. He stated the first option is to call a state of emergency, which allows Mr. Roper to do exactly what he needs, or we can call a special-called meeting to designate the money, because we will know what the money will be for.
- Councilman Whitehurst stated he hears the passion from Chairman Costner. He stated the best intentions in the world have unintended consequences. He stated we want to do well, but it is not our place to try and figure out stuff like this. He stated on our website, we list all the churches and places that will help to do stuff like this. He stated he believes it is not the government's role to figure out things like this for people. He stated there are people better to handle situations like this rather than government.
- Chairman Costner stated what if we give staff direction to reinstate the task force if there is an emergency situation, and then I will call Council to have a special-called meeting.
- Councilman Whitehurst asked for more information on what Chairman Costner means when he says task force.
- Mr. Roper stated in the task force before, he had workers who we were going to be paying to stay home. For example, the Airport was closed and the Library was closed. He stated the custodial staff for these facilities would be sitting at home and we would be paying them anyways. He stated what he liked, was that he had that pool and Carlos would direct Ken on a situation where these people could help. He stated we do not have these workers now, so it would be different. Mr. Roper stated if we could not find help, he would have to stop someone from doing their job to send them to do this task.
- Vice Chairman Bowers stated he feels the need for this task force was very much needed back in March/April, due to businesses being closed. He stated there are so many resources out there right now.
- After much more discussion, Chairman Costner stated he was hoping to find a way to help out citizens who need it, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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- Vice Chairman Bowers stated he feels that the United Way can do these services.
- Chairman Costner stated the next phone call he gets; he will send them to the United Way and tell them to dial 211.
- Seeing no other discussion, the Chairman moved forward to the next item on the agenda.

❖ **No Action Taken by the Committee.**

SOLAR FARM ORDINANCES – Log No. 132

- Mr. Roper stated we talked about Solar Farm Ordinances a little over a year ago. He stated that Council looked at Solar Farm Ordinances and came up with a proposed Ordinance of what a solar farm would look like in Pickens County. He stated Council talked about the height of the posts, the way the roads had to go to enter the solar farm, the setbacks around the solar farm, size and shapes of roads, and the bonding of decommission requirements. He stated Council passed first reading of the Solar Farm Ordinances for Project Pine and Project Plobano. He stated at the time, it was being driven by one particular group who wanted to do it. Mr. Roper explained the feedback he received from the proposed ordinance.
 - Councilman Whitehurst asked who came up with the proposed ordinance language.
 - Mr. Roper stated the Planning Commission did. He stated Chris Brink, Community Development Director, talked with other jurisdictions in South Carolina and one in Georgia. He stated the heights and distances were conversations that Council had in a Committee meeting.
 - Chairman Costner asked about the solar farm that you see off of Highway 123 in Liberty.
 - Mr. Roper stated Blue Ridge and the School District of Pickens County owns that solar farm.
 - After much more discussion regarding the proposed Ordinance of the Solar Farms, Vice Chairman Bowers made a motion to move out of committee for second reading, and recommit to the committee for further discussion. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster, and carried unanimously (6-0).
- ❖ **Vice Chairman Bowers made a motion to move out of committee for first reading, and recommit to the committee for further discussion. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster, and carried unanimously (6-0).**

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further Committee business, Chairman Roy Costner called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilman Wes Hendricks, seconded by Vice Chairman Chris Bowers and carried unanimously (6-0).