

****Please note - These are not official minutes of the Pickens County Council meeting. This reflects the issues that were before Council and shows the actions, however the minutes are not “official” until the County Council meets and approves them as presented. Please contact, Donna Owen, Council Clerk for any questions.**

April 3, 2006
Regular Meeting
7:00 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, March 27, 2006.

Council Members in attendance:

Jennifer H. Willis, Chairman
G. Neil Smith, Vice Chairman
James B. London, Vice Chairman Pro Tempore
C. Roy Collins
Tom Ponder
Ben L. Trotter

Staff: Ralph Guarino, Interim County Administrator
Lynn Fisher, Assistant County Administrator
Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

Absent: Ken Roper, County Attorney

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Willis called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. Invocation was given by Councilman Roy Collins

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM MARCH 20, 2006:

>> Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Roy Collins and unanimously passed to approve the minutes as presented.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Junius Smith. A member of (CARAST) Citizens Against Reassessment and Sales Tax. Mr. Smith stated the State of South Carolina now had test cases with Counties in court over issues with reassessment. Mr. Smith stated the county of Fairfield was obligated to reimburse the citizens. Mr. Smith gave examples of issues regarding the inconsistencies of reassessment, especially the fact that appeals were getting better assessed value than others who have not appealed. A request for Council to refund the citizens 2 Million dollars was made as well as a 10% reduction of the budget for next fiscal year.

Weldon Clark. Mr. Clark provided Council a copy of *Gun Week* and stated that South Carolina needed to be active in the idea of being a “firearms friendly” state. Mr. Clark

stated the manufacturers of firearms were meeting resistance in some areas, and Pickens County should take this opportunity to promote its many amenities for gun manufacturing businesses.

Deb Edson and Katie Hudson. Ms. Edson and student, Katie Hudson requested that Pickens County consider matching a 4H director’s position for the Pickens County Area. Both citizens spoke of the many positive things 4H has accomplished. Ms. Edson stated this used to be funded through Clemson Extension, and was cut from the Clemson budget. Ms. Edson and Ms. Hudson stated when a program is enforced by volunteers it can show evidence of fading out.

Dan Winchester. Mr. Winchester complained about citizens, including himself, receiving a delinquent tax bill after he applied for an appeal. Mr. Winchester stated the citizens deserved better treatment, and there should be some way of knowing that an appeal is taking place so that citizens do not receive such notice. Further stated was there should be better communication between the Treasurer and Tax Assessor.

Alex Saitta. Mr. Saitta addressed Council as a member of the Pumpkintown Fire District that the fire district was inflating their budget. Mr. Saitta said the fire district is responding to calls that they should not respond to, and they are trying to create salaries for a fire chief. Mr. Saitta also stated he realized the fire district is trying now to become a “level 4” which would allow the department to respond to such things as animal bites.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Tom Ponder was called upon for the following report:

The Justice and Public Safety Committee met with Committee Chair Tom Ponder presiding, all members were in attendance.

Staff: Ralph Guarino, Interim County Administrator
 Lynn Fisher, Assistant County Administrator
 Donna Owen, Clerk to Council

| Item | Description | Referred | Committee Action |
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| 1. | <u>Temporary Power Poles.</u> | 01/03/05 | Committee recommends temporary power poles be permitted for mobile homes the same as for stick built homes; power should have final inspection within 45 days. Committee retains this issue in committee for the purpose of staff input. >Committee action was approved by council by unanimous vote. |
| 2 | Council rules. | 02/21/06 | Committee recommends (2) amendments to the rules: <u>Amendment #1. Placing Items on the Agenda:</u> The County Council Agenda shall be approved by the Chairman of County Council. However, if a Council Member desires to place an item on the regular agenda this should be done by (2) members of Council sponsoring the item. The item should be sent to the Clerk (9) days prior to the regular meeting. All requested items will be automatically placed on the consent agenda for referral to the appropriate committee unless the Chairman chooses to |

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| | | | <p>move it for action.</p> <p><u>Amendment #2. Committee of the Whole:</u></p> <p>Council shall have a Committee of Council as the whole. This committee will follow the same rules as all committees and will work on issues which are referred to Council as a whole. All actions which take place in the Committee of the Whole will go back to regular Council meetings for approval. A detailed agenda log will be kept, and items will be referred to the Committee of the Whole during regular Council Meetings.</p> <p>>Committee action was approved by council by unanimous vote.</p> |
| 3 | Study issues regarding vicious animals and other matters of animal control. | 03/20/06 | <p>Committee recommends further study, and to schedule a future meeting with the Solicitor and Chief Magistrate. Also staff was instructed to study issues and bring back to committee.</p> |
| 4 | EMS/ Fire Committee | 03/20/06 | <p>Committee recommends a formal Board and Commission be formed entitled the Public Safety Committee. Members should represent EMS, Rescue, Fire, 911, and Municipalities. Applications should be submitted to Council for approval.</p> <p>>Committee action was approved by council by unanimous vote.</p> |

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT:

1. Mr. Guarino requested that Council consider adding the Accommodations Tax recommendations to the Consent Agenda for referral to the Administration and Finance Committee.
2. Mr. Guarino introduced the new Roads and Bridges Director, Mr. Bo Beuchemin. Mr. Guarino stated Mr. Beuchemin comes to Pickens County with experience as he served as the director for Berkeley County.

MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:

1. Accommodations Tax Recommendations. Neil Smith moved to add to the consent Agenda. Motion was seconded by Roy Collins and unanimously passed. Issue was referred to the Administration and Finance Committee.
2. Computer Monitors at the Courthouse. Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Neil Smith and unanimously passed to send the issue of monitors for the Clerk of Court's office to the appropriate Committee. (consent agenda has the issue of policy regarding monitors, and Mr. Trotter's motion will be added to the agenda log)

PRESENTATION BY BEN KISSAM, PICKENS COUNTY BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE:

Ben Kissam, Chairman of the Beautification Committee, came before Council and informed them of ongoing projects with the committee. Dr. Kissam introduced staff members and members of the committee who were in attendance. Also recognized was Gina McClellan who gave an overview of the success of this year's Trash Bash.

Council thanked staff and the Committee for this program.

RECOGNITION OF RETIRED EMPLOYEES:

Council recognized Mr. Frank Dyar who retired from the Tax Assessors office and Troy Porter who retired as the Roads and Bridges Director.

FIRST READING OF FY 2007 BUDGET ORDINANCE:

>>Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Roy Collins and unanimously passed that this constitutes a first reading of the FY 2006/2007 budget ordinance.

Mr. Guarino commented the budget before council was a balanced budget with no tax increase.

Roy Collins challenged Council to realize a ceiling for the County's fund balance and to cut up to 5 mills from the proposed budget.

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL FOR A HIGHWAY SAFETY GRANT FOR THE SHERIFFS OFFICE:

>>Motion was made by Neil Smith, seconded by Roy Collins and unanimously passed to approve the grant which is for DUI.

CONSIDERATION OF A PROPOSED FEMA/DHS ASSISTANCE GRANT FOR PUMPKINTOWN FIRE DISTRICT TO PROVIDE A FIRE TRUCK IN THE AMOUNT OF \$225,000, MATCH PORTION IS \$11,250, WHICH WILL COME FROM THEIR RESERVES:

>>Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Tom Ponder and unanimously passed to approve the grant for Pumpkintown.

CONSENT AGENDA:

>>Motion was made by Roy Collins, seconded by Tom Ponder and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda as amended.

- Ballard Hill Road - Refer to the Public Service Committee.
- Policy to determine needs for computer monitors per County Departments. Refer to the Administration and Finance committee.
- Study the issues of the Medical Indigent Assistance Program (MIAP) Refer to the Administration and Finance Committee.
- Consider approval of preliminary engineering report for Roper Wastewater Treatment Upgrade. Refer to the Public Service Committee.

Addition:

- Accommodation Tax recommendations sent to the Administration and Finance Committee.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

>>Motion was made by James London, seconded by Neil Smith and unanimously passed to convene in executive session for the stated purpose.

Appointments to:

- Economic Development and Recreation.

PUBLIC SESSION RECONVENED:

Chairman Willis called the public session back to order and allowed the following motions.

1. **Economic Development.** Motion was made by Neil Smith, seconded by Roy Collins and unanimously passed to appoint Nancy Bennett and Bill Harley.
2. **Recreation Committee.** Motion was made by Neil Smith, seconded by Roy Collins and unanimously passed to re-appoint David Gessell.

ADJOURN:

With no further business before the Pickens County Council, motion to adjourn was made by Roy Collins, seconded by Neil Smith and unanimously passed. Council stood adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

Jennifer H. Willis, Chairman