

April 23, 2007
Regular Council Meeting
6:00 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, April, 18 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
Ken Roper, County Attorney
Donna Owen, Clerk to Council
Lynn Fisher, Assistant County Administrator
Ralph Guarino, Finance Director
Olivia Vassey, Research Analyst

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Smith called the meeting of April 23, 2007 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Chairman Smith called upon Councilman Randy Crenshaw for the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

>>Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Tom Ponder to approve the minutes of April 2, 2007.

>James London requested the minutes be amended to include the Southern By-Pass in the work session report. James London stated this was discussed and should be included, council concurred. Motion to approve minutes as amended passed with all members voting in favor with the exception of Jennifer Willis who abstained due to her absence.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT:

Mr. Hurst provided Council with the following memorandums and stated no action was requested.

Removal of Dam on Twelve Mile River

I have been contacted by Larry Dyck and Amanda Bauknight concerning the Schlumberger lawsuit and the removal of a third dam on the Twelve Mile river basin. The Schlumberger lawsuit provided for the removal of two dams upstream from the Easley-Central Water District. If the third dam were removed it would open additional recreation areas for rafting, tubing and other tourism events. However, to remove the third dam will impact the Easley-Central District by over \$3 million dollars. The original

lawsuit provided funds to restore the river to its original state but did not provide funding for removal of the third dam. It is my understanding that Mr. Dyck and Mrs. Bauknight are attempting to set up meetings with all parties that would have concerns concerning the removal of the dam to determine if there is enough interest and availability of funds to remove the third dam. I have contacted Joe Bracken of Easley-Central Water District and he stated that Easley-Central is neutral in this matter but that the removal of the dam will require a new water intake and a new reservoir and that the Board has stated that their customers could not contribute toward any costs associated with this project.

>>Ben Trotter stated he thought this was an issue for DHEC and EPA. He did not think the County should be involved.

>>James London stated he would disagree; the state of Georgia prospered from the settlement and he thought the County should stay actively involved with this process in order to protect the County interest.

Safety and Wellness Committees

We have re-instituted a Pickens County Safety Committee composed of representatives from six different departments and the Human Resource Director. These individuals are visiting the various departments throughout the County and observing workers in their normal course of carrying out their daily tasks to determine if hazards are present or unsafe situations exist. They are also identifying where personal protective equipment might be needed or it is not being properly used. Once hazards are identified we meet with the Department Head to correct unsafe conditions.

The Wellness Committee has continued to meet and recently held a seatbelt check for County employees as they entered the work site. Those employees who were wearing their seatbelts were rewarded with a certificate for a free Chic-Fil-A sandwich that was donated by Chic-Fil-A to the County for distribution. Those that weren't wearing a seatbelt were reminded of the fact that this is a state law and that we should develop good habits for seatbelt use and of the consequences that can occur if one is involved in an accident and is not wearing a seatbelt.

Bids on Tri-County Landfill

...Mr. Hurst stated he would refer this to the next council meeting:

Bids will be received on the Tri-County Landfill on April 19th at 2:00 p.m. at the COG office in Greenville. The bids will be forwarded to each Council for acceptance. This item needs to be addressed as soon as possible and therefore, I would suggest it be referred to the Budget Work Shop on the 24th for discussion.

MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Smith opened the floor up for new business. Seeing none, the Chair ruled this item closed.

PUBLIC HEARING AND THIRD READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 386 AN ORDINANCE TO BE KNOWN AS THE UNIFORM ORDINANCE FOR FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS; TO PROVIDE FOR CONTINUED FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES IN THE COUNTY; TO ESTABLISH STANDARD OPERATING RULES

AND GUIDELINES FOR FIRE DISTRICT; AND TO AUTHORIZE THE CREATION OF BYLAWS FOR SAID DISTRICTS:

Chairman Smith opened the floor for the Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 386.

1. Matt Chappell. – Mr. Chappell stated he is not in favor of the ordinance due to the fact that he feels like council is trying to force all fire districts to be the same. Mr. Chappell also stated he thought more input should have been given by the district boards or the citizens within the districts.
2. David Crowe. - Mr. Crowe spoke in opposition of the ordinance because he thought council was rushing to force uniformity that the districts were not ready for, he agreed with Mr. Chappell by stating the districts are too different.
3. Weldon Clark, - Mr. Clark stated he was in favor of uniformity especially if it meant a better inventory and sharing of common equipment.

Chairman Smith thanked everyone for their opinions and with no more citizens requesting to speak; Chairman Smith closed the Public Hearing.

>>Motion was made by Ben Trotter, and seconded by Tom Ponder that this constitutes third and final reading of Ordinance no. 386.

>>Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Randy Crenshaw to amend section 22-54 to state---All revenues and funds raised by a valid 501(c)(3) charitable organization, established to benefit a district, are not required to be deposited as outlined herein. All disbursements shall be made as provided by law. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Smith asked for any further amendments or discussion.

Council Members stated this ordinance was not different from the districts previous ordinance. Chairman Smith stated this ordinance's main difference is the fact that it instructs the district how to go from a fee based district to a millage base, or millage to fees. James London stated all boundaries are still the same. Tom Ponder stated the creation of this ordinance and by-laws were communicated openly with all fire districts. Letters were sent to each district asking for their input. Ben Trotter made the point that the by-laws were nothing more than compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, and all fire districts had to meet the same criteria for public meetings.

Seeing no further amendments, Chairman Smith called for the motion as amended. Motion carried as amended with a unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF THE FAIR HOUSING RESOLUTION:

>>Motion was made by Jennifer Willis, seconded by Ben Trotter and unanimously passed to approve the Fair Housing Resolution.

**CREATION OF A MULTI-COUNTY PARK AT THE SACO LOWELL SITE;
RECESS FOR DISCUSSION WITH STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS:**

>>Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Jennifer Willis and unanimously passed to convene a recess for the purpose of informal discussion in the presence of the public, to discuss the issues of development at the Saco Lowell Site.

Chairman Smith stated this was a discussion for State and Local officials and further asked State and Local Officials to move up front for discussions. Chairman Smith stated he initially thought that he would recess to the Main Conference Room for this discussion however, given the number of citizens in attendance, he would remain in Council Chambers.

Chairman Smith reiterated this is a recess from the formal meeting, but is being done in the presence of the media and the public for discussion of the Saco Lowell Project.

Chairman Smith allowed discussion regarding funding responsibilities, infrastructure opportunities, State responsibilities, City of Easley's responsibilities, County obligations, and various other concerns for the development of this project, Council expressed concern regarding work on State Highways. Also Council was concerned about voting on an issue when it was unknown the amounts of various funding sources, especially Department of Transportation and other State agencies.

After all parties were given an opportunity to speak, Chairman Smith closed the recess and resumed the regular meeting.

REGULAR MEETING RECONVENED:

Chairman Smith called the regular meeting back to order and advised that Council had recessed to an informal meeting, in the presence of the media and public, for the purpose of discussion with State and Local officials regarding the development of the Saco Lowell Project.

Chairman Smith stated he would not call for a vote at this meeting, but would place the issue on the May 7, 2007 agenda. Chairman Smith asked the Administrator to compile the funding sources as heard during the recess. Also Chairman Smith instructed Council to get any questions as it relates to this project, to the Administrator by Thursday of this week. This will give the developer until Tuesday of next week to provide answers.

Council requested all correspondence which are made to or from the County Administrator, will also be copied to the City of Easley Administrator, the Delegation office, and the Developer. Further instructions were that all parties are to direct questions directly to the County Administrator.

CONSENT AGENDA:

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

- Recommendations from the Accommodations Tax Committee. Referred to the Administration and Finance Committee.
- Request for eligibility for Tax Credits from Old Sir Shirtmaker Manufacturing. Referred to the Administration and Finance Committee.

- Request from the City of Central to escrow paving funds for one project. Referred to the Administration and Finance Committee.
- Request for easement at Table Rock Recycling Center. Referred to the Public Service Committee.
- Study current requirements for residential connection to sewer. Referred to the Education, Recreation, Health, Welfare, and County Planning Committee .
- Paving list- Public Service Committee

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- Contractual Issue

>>Motion was made by Ben Trotter, seconded by Randy Crenshaw and unanimously passed to convene in executive session for the stated purpose.

PUBLIC SESSION RECONVENED:

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

>>Tom Ponder moved to authorize the purchase of approximately 34 acres adjacent to the landfill for the purpose of landfill closure. Motion was seconded by Randy Crenshaw and unanimously passed.

ADJOURN:

With there being no further business before the Pickens County Council, motion to adjourn was made by Jennifer Willis, seconded by James London and unanimously passed. Council stood adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

Donna F. Owen, Clerk to Council

G. Neil Smith, Chairman