

## **Regular Pickens County Council Meeting**

May 3, 2021

6:30 PM

County Council met in regular session, in the Auditorium of the County Administration Facility, with Chairman Chris Bowers presiding. Agendas, bearing date, time, and location of meeting were mailed to members of council and local news media on April 28, 2021.

### 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

Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council

Les Hendricks, Contract Attorney

### **WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Chris Bowers called the meeting of May 3, 2021 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Chairman Chris Bowers led the Invocation, and Veteran George Petersen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Council presented a Certificate in Honor to Veteran George Petersen, thanking 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, and who left a voicemail through the County phone in Council Chambers.

1. Chris Williams: Mr. Williams stated following our excerpts from the book "Dark Agenda," by David Horowitz, who was a former 60's radical turned conservative who came to his senses. He stated Brigadier General E John Teichert commands 412<sup>th</sup> Test Wing Edwards Air Force Base in California and he is under attack because he maintains a personal, not official, website called Prayer at Lunchtime for the United States. He stated Michael Weinstein, founder of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, claims the general's prayer website is unconstitutional. Mr. Williams stated that Weinstein describes General Teichert as a fundamentalist Christian tyrant and religious extremist. Mr. Williams gave much more discussion on these two gentlemen to Council.
2. Deb Mitchell: Ms. Mitchell stated she is the curator of the Mountain View Americana Art Show, and stated it is being dubbed as the "little show that could." She stated what started out as just a fundraiser to reopen the Dacusville Art Room and give free lessons has turned into a national and international art show. She stated they have 289 pieces of art coming from around the United States and Canada, and as of right now, 23 artists will be flying in or driving in from across the Country. Ms. Mitchell stated the show has turned huge due to having some contacts in the western art world. She stated the reason she is here this evening is to ask Council to allow alcohol to be permitted to be served at the three events. She stated the people attending will be well

established people that are coming to buy high-end art. Ms. Mitchell stated she has put a lot of work and time into this show and they have hired Pickens County Sheriff's Office to be security during the evening. She stated she believes if wine and craft beer were allowed, it would give the show a level of elegance and sophistication that you cannot get with Coca-Cola.

3. Susan Robinette: Ms. Robinette stated she is there tonight to ask for Council's help in fixing a problem we residents of Pickens County all share. She stated although we have an animal control ordinance, animals here continue to suffer starvation, chaining, cruelty, neglect and abandonment. She stated the Ordinance needs to be strengthened with the addition of specific fines and penalties for violations, and it needs to be enforced. Ms. Robinette provided information to Council on two major violations that have happened in the past two weeks in Pickens County. She stated the Ordinance seems rather useless in light of the abuse taking place. She stated she understands Council is not the enforcers, but Council does control and write the ordinance, and can add some "teeth" to it in order to make it stronger and more enforceable. She stated Council can't just wash their hands of this because enforcement isn't their area of concern. Ms. Robinette stated if abusers can count on being fined, penalized and/or lose their animals, they will change their behavior. She stated we no longer live in the dark ages, and to please help in their fight to see this problem corrected. She stated the continuing abuse of animals in Pickens County also negatively affects our reputation in contrast to neighboring counties, whose citizens and councils have worked very hard to correct their abuse issues. She stated their ordinances are all much stronger. She suggested fines that could be easily added to the ordinance and which they feel would make it stronger, and more enforceable. She stated fine amounts can be documented and given to the Pickens County Animal Shelter to help better the condition of the animals in their care. Lastly, she stated the SC state Animal Cruelty Code 47-1-40 states that violations shall be considered misdemeanors with a penalty of up to 30 days in jail or a \$500.00 fine. She stated things could get tougher for abusers.
4. Elaine Masceri: Ms. Masceri stated the problem is the lack of enforcement of the Animal Abuse Ordinance. She stated for those of you on Council who did not write these ordinances, this is your opportunity to correct them so they can be enforced. She stated one of the main concerns that cases fall apart in court is that they lack specificity. For example, she stated section 4-5 abandonment – it does not address how many days an animal has to be left alone before it is considered to be abandoned. She stated this also applies to section 4-7 animal care – this is a legal loophole that can easily be argued in court. She suggests that Council put a limit on it of 2 days. Ms. Masceri gave another example, stating Section 4-10 owning or keeping a vicious animal – item h contains two sentences, and Ms. Masceri stated the sentences regarding hunting dogs. She gave an example of 4-9 (c), which gives more information on if an animal attacks a person or another animal, it can be put down. She suggested strengthen the laws with more specifics, and to be proactive instead of reactive. Ms. Masceri asked how many times in the past 4 years has someone been physically arrested for animal abuse. She stated if you care about the laws you write, even if you don't enforce them, then you should care if anyone does enforce them. She stated otherwise, it is an exercise in futility and a waste of taxpayer money.
5. Margaret Thompson: Ms. Thompson stated when she opened up Clemson Paw Partners in Central, that Council so graciously leased us a building, one of the quotes they will be putting on their wall is "We choose to do what's hard, not what's easy" by John F. Kennedy. Ms. Thompson stated they are almost done with phase 1, which is the renovation. She stated they have started a little on phase 2, which is moving in equipment. Ms. Thompson stated equipment is expensive. She stated we have paid for all of this with people donating, not government, not grants, and not borrowing from Council. She stated this past week, pictures were sent to her of six dogs that looked like they were starving. She stated the same person that reported them, also reported them to Animal Control in January 2020. Ms. Thompson stated they were seized, and what should have

happened, after talking with another animal enforcement officer in Anderson County, is that these people should have been charged. She stated enforcement needs to start putting fines and putting them in jail because the money rolls down to them and the only way Pickens County will keep their no kill status is they have to depend on rescues, or they will be euthanized. Ms. Thompson stated she called the courts today to ask of the fines, which half goes to the state and half goes to the county. She stated rescues get nothing, but they absorb the cost. She stated we need to form a committee with citizens, shelter workers, animal control and council to come up with solutions.

6. Sharon Baker: Ms. Baker stated she has recently moved from Florida and has been doing TNR for the past 20 years. She stated in Florida, she spayed and neutered over 200 cats and found homes for them. She stated it is her passion to take care of these homeless animals. Ms. Baker stated she went to the Pickens County Animal Shelter and met Stacy Kelly, and she explained to him what she wanted to do regarding to start working there and helping spay and neutering cats. She stated that Mr. Kelly told her this is South Carolina, not Florida, and as far as he is concerned they are nuisances and rodents, and she should take the cats and move back to Florida. Ms. Baker stated she did not give up, and she's probably spayed and neutered around 30 cats so far and she has met some wonderful people in this room who have helped her. She stated she has been told by Mr. Kelly that she can no longer get vouchers and that she took advantage of the program. She advised that it has been around 8 weeks since she has been able to help spay and neuter cats. She stated she is disappointed that she has tried to help but Mr. Kelly is getting paid to run the shelter when he does not care about the animals.
7. Pat Mulkey: Mr. Mulkey stated he is there this evening to try to convince the county to put the entire county on the same level playing field as most of our cities regarding Sunday Alcohol Sales, and looking at allowing beer and wine at county facilities. He gave an example on Anderson County and their civic center allowing beer and wine after the first five years. He stated we have been losing tourism money to Anderson, Oconee and Greenville county for a long time. Mr. Mulkey stated he put on an event this past weekend, which allowed beer and wine, and there were 4500 people in attendance over two days. He stated the Pickens County Performing Arts Center will impact from this.
8. Jennifer Maw: Ms. Maw stated she runs a local horse rescue, just outside of Six Mile, and she has called animal control several times on five horses that are starving. She stated about a year and a half ago, one of the horses did lay down and pass away. Ms. Maw stated it took 3 days for animal control to come out there. She stated something needs to be done. She gave council a breakdown on what it costs to rehabilitate one horse in one month, which came to around \$615 per horse. She stated these people need to be fined and put in jail. Ms. Maw stated that money should be paid back to the rescuers, people, etc. who have helped these animals.
9. Melanie Hancock: Ms. Hancock stated she runs Kits n Kats Rescue and they adopt out of PetSmart in Easley. She stated she is not sure when this was implemented, but they started giving out vouchers to residents to get their cats fixed. She stated this has been huge and she would like for this to continue. She stated that is a wonderful option to be able to give residents.
10. Allan Quinn: Mr. Quinn stated he would like to speak again about the lack of Economic Development in Pickens County. Mr. Quinn stated he was not allowed to respond to Councilman Whitehurst at the last meeting, when he denigrated his message so he will take his time to do that now. He stated that Councilman Whitehurst said he did not want Greenville jobs in Pickens County, and that Mr. Quinn wanted high-paying jobs, and that he did not mind having to drive to work in Greenville County, that he gets to come home to this. Mr. Quinn stated this is low paying jobs, people from other areas moving in here in droves, no tax revenue from great companies, and

no career opportunities for our young people. He stated he would like for Pickens County to remain much like it was yesterday, as would many other, but it will not happen. Mr. Quinn stated if we think it will, we are living in a cave. He stated the area between Charlotte and Atlanta is going to explode in the next 20 years, and many of us here tonight will not be here to see it happen. He stated if proactive action is not taken then the progressive left plan to push low paying jobs, and government housing into suburbs is going to happen here, which is called AFFH. After much more discussion, Mr. Quinn stated growth is coming, and although we may be gone, our descendants won't be and they will inherit what you do or don't do in the short term. He stated the better paying companies invest more and just pay higher county taxes, so by recruiting them, you will get much more in taxes and that can reduce the tax burden on our citizens. Mr. Quinn stated at the Council Goals for 2021 meeting, Councilman Whitehurst stated that industrial employment does not matter. He stated that is not true, he stated industry is the base of most local economics.

11. Johnnelle Raines: Ms. Raines stated she is there this evening to talk about how important property rights are and urge Council to sign the resolution that COT sent you to consider. She stated we have started a petition online, and live, to show you how many of your constituents want you to pass this resolution. She stated our bible is pro-private property rights. She stated one can read many passages that indeed support that statement (communist, Marxist, equity believing democrats) however think there should be abolition of private property for the common good. She stated God is the owner of the property, not the government, and God has created us humans, as good stewards, with responsibilities to our property. She stated Council were elected to make good decisions over protecting our individual God-giving right to property. She stated the 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment is clear, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house, or even his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor." She stated we the people want you to assure us by signing the private property rights resolution that there is indeed no smidgen of communist, Marxist or equity believing ideology that you have hidden in your heart. Ms. Raines stated let's not forget Deuteronomy 19:14. She stated protection of our proper private property rights matter and Council signing our resolution is a huge step in reassuring us that with a Joe Biden in the White House, who has shown clearly he is all on board with assaulting our property rights, that Council will have our best interest at heart when approving the soon to be debated comprehensive plan. She stated we want Government to protect our God-giving rights, not diminish them. She stated when government goes unchecked, it will take from the people. She stated that is ungodly and breaking the tenth commandment. She stated we would appreciate if you not only sign this resolution but make it into an ordinance, like the second amendment sanctuary ordinance, and name it private property sanctuary county ordinance. She stated private property protection is what best serves the continuation of prosperity in our county, and we do not want communism.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

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

- April 5, 2021                      Regular Council Meeting
  - April 13, 2021                     Special-Called Meeting
  - April 13, 2021                     Budget Work Session
- 
- Motion was made by Councilman Henry Wilson, and seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster. Seeing no other discussion, the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

## **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

### **COVID-19 Response Briefing**

Mr. Roper updated Council on COVID-19 cases in Pickens County. Mr. Roper stated there are currently 273 active cases reported in Pickens County, within the last 14 days. He stated there have been two hundred ninety-five (295) deaths in Pickens County due to COVID-19. He advised a total of 18,508 confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Pickens County since March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Mr. Roper gave Council information on the DHEC Vaccine Statistics. He stated 29,466, or approximately 28%, of Pickens County residents have completed vaccinations. He stated that 37,977 residents have at least 1 vaccine, and are awaiting their second dose.

### **Pickens County Capital Improvement Plan Update**

Mr. Roper gave Council more information on the Capital Improvement Plan and the status of items that have been approved by Council. He went into detailed information on the spreadsheet. He stated he will be updating Council monthly on these capital purchases and their status.

### **Mile Creek Park New Office Hours**

Mr. Roper stated beginning Monday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Mile Creek Park office will have the following set office hours:

Monday-Friday

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

### **Continued Implementation of our Branding and Marketing Plan**

Mr. Roper stated the Notice of Award to Thrift Development Construction has been signed for the Grant Meadow Overlook. He stated that staff is planning a groundbreaking ceremony soon. He stated we are waiting for SCDOT to return the permit to us before having a ceremony.

### **Long Shoals Roadside Park**

Mr. Roper presented photos of Long Shoals Roadside Park. He stated it is managed by forestry and they do not have a lot of resources they commit to it because they have a lot of locations they have to manage. He stated because of this, the park does not look good and this is the first thing people see when coming into Pickens County. He stated we are recommending and have negotiated a proposed lease with the Forestry Commission where we take over and manage that park. He stated they recommend first reading in title only on this ordinance, as well as sending the Overriding Recreation and Parks plan to the committee so staff can describe to Council how we intend to take care of this park, as well as the other parks.

### **Fort Prince George**

Mr. Roper stated one of the recommendations from the marketing study was to utilize Mile Creek Park to recreate Fort Prince George. He stated there is a model of Fort Price George in the lobby of Council Chambers this evening. Mr. Roper stated we have been looking at this as a staff to see if we thought there was feasibility to do it. He stated he and some staff will be traveling to this sister fort at Fort Loudon State Historic Area in TN to talk with them on how they operate.

Mr. Roper stated that is the end of his report this evening and asked if Council had any questions.

Councilman Saitta stated asked Mr. Roper if he could recap the schedule for the comprehensive plan and who's creating it.

Mr. Roper stated the comprehensive plan is being developed through the auspices of our community development office. He stated the planning commission will have to review this plan and make

recommendations to Council. He stated we anticipate that will be going to the planning commission this summer and hope that Council will be receiving pieces of that plan for approval in the fall.

Councilman Saitta asked when ACOG would be finished on the Highway 11 study.

Mr. Roper stated he asked for an update on that from ACOG but that should be this summer as well.

Vice Chairman Costner stated during Public Forum, a citizen had made some disparaging remarks about an experience at the Animal Shelter. He stated Council does not get into the day to day operations, but he would like to ask for an update on what happened and how we can become more useful in the future.

Mr. Roper stated he took extensive notes during that citizen's public forum comment and he will investigate and follow up with the citizen. He stated he will also follow up with Council. Mr. Roper gave Council statistics from April at the Animal Shelter.

Councilman Whitehurst stated we are seeing a recurring theme and it seems to him people are not being ticketed or arrested, and it is not just with animals. He stated if they don't even bother to issue a citation from our ordinance, it will not matter if we make it stronger.

Mr. Roper stated Council is the legislative branch of our county government, not the executive branch, and the sheriff is directly accountable to the voters.

Councilman Whitehurst asked if he could request from the Sheriff a list of citations he has gave for animal control.

Mr. Roper stated yes he will request that information.

Councilman Saitta gave his opinion and suggestions on changes for the Animal Control Ordinance. He stated he believes the ordinance is thorough.

Councilman Henry Wilson asked if we could get data for citations and convictions from the Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Roper stated yes, absolutely.

### **COMMITTEE REPORT:**

**The Committee of the Whole met in Main Conference Room, at the Pickens County Administration Facility, on Monday, April 19, 2021. All members of the committee were in attendance, with Chairman Chris Bowers presiding. Vice Chairman Roy Costner led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.**

### **WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:**

**Chairman Chris Bowers called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order.**

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE:**

#### **Council Rules – Log No. 161**

- Chairman Bowers stated at our last Committee of the Whole meeting, Council ended this discussion on Section 3.5: Council to Act Collectively.
- Councilman Alex Saitta quoted Section 3.5, stating "*Members shall not participate, or attempt to influence, day-to-day operational activities of the County...*" He stated this is in compliance with the law. He quoted the next part of Section 3.5, stating "*...nor should members communicate with County Employees...*" and Councilman Saitta stated this goes way behind the law because the law only says Council cannot give employees instructions or orders. He stated he believes Council should not give orders but it goes too far stating Council cannot communicate. He stated he suggests we change Section 3.5 to say "*Members shall not participate, or attempt to*

*influence, day-to-day operational activities of the County, nor give order or instructions to any County officers or employees, and must abide by Home Rule Act and/or other provisions of state law.”*

- Chairman Bowers stated he would like to keep the following in Section 3.5, as he feels it is needed: “*(Other than the Administrator, an employee designated by the Administrator for a specific, limited purpose, or the Clerk to Council).*” He stated he would like to make this a separate sentence at the end of Section 3.5.
- Mr. Hendricks provided Council with information regarding the State Law and The Home Rule Act.
- Chairman Bowers stated we could remove the word “Communicate” from Section 3.5 and change it to “act in the role of the Administrator.”
- Councilman Saitta explained a situation regarding how Council members could violate this rule.
- Councilman Henry Wilson explained another situation regarding how Council could violate this rule, stating this has happened to him in another situation.
- Vice Chairman Costner stated what if we kept part of Section 3.5, quoting, “*Members shall not participate, or attempt to influence, day-to-day operational activities of the County...*” and add Section 4-9-660 to it, quoting, “*Except for the purposes of inquiries and investigations, the council shall deal with county officers and employees who are subject to the direction and supervision of the county administrator solely through the administrator, and neither the council nor its members shall give orders or instructions to any such officers or employees.*”
- After much more discussion between Council and staff, Councilman Trey Whitehurst made a motion to remove Section 3.5 (C) in the Council Organizational Rules, to replace with Section 2.2 (E). Motion was seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).

❖ **Councilman Trey Whitehurst made a motion to remove Section 3.5 (C) in the Council Organizational Rules, to replace with Section 2.2 (E). Motion was seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).**

- **Council Action on Log No. 161:** Councilman Trey Whitehurst made a motion to remove Section 3.5 (C) in the Council Organizational Rules, to replace with Section 2.2 (E). Motion was seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).

Chairman Chris Bowers stated no second is required of this motion as it comes from a recommendation from the Committee. Chairman Chris Bowers asked if there was any discussion:

- Councilman Alex Saitta went into discussion on why he would like to see these changes in Council’s policy.
- Seeing no other discussion, motion carried unanimously (6-0).

#### **Discuss Policy behind reserving County Property – Log No. 135**

- Mr. Roper stated that County staff is faced with requests from time to time to allow consumption of alcohol at county-owned facilities. He stated the current policy of Council is that no alcohol is allowed on county property, regardless of circumstances. He stated this is a wise-policy, and he would not recommend we abandon, given that the family-oriented nature of our county parks necessitate strict no-alcohol operations. He stated it is his recommendation that council consider allowing staff to develop guidelines for permitting temporary and limited consumption at county facilities, which would require specific hours of alcohol service, and only beer and wine. stated he would ask Council to consider allowing staff to permit temporary one-time events on County Property. He stated we do not want to change the nature of the county properties, but come up for a perimeter permit to hold beer/wine at events. He stated staff would also require proof of insurance and verification that reasonable precautions will be followed to prohibit overindulgence. He stated we could put language where they’re insurance must come first, before ours. Mr. Roper advised that staff would need to develop a written application, which would set parameters around timing, notice and buffering from other events and the public.
- Vice Chairman Costner asked what the neighboring counties are currently doing regarding this.
- Mr. Roper stated he is not exactly sure, but he will check and report back to Council.
- After more discussion between Council, Councilman Saitta stated he does not support this. He stated over the next 20 years, Pickens County will change substantially with people moving here. He stated his advice is to hold on to what you can, because in the end, that is all you have left.
- Chairman Bowers stated he understands what Councilman Saitta is saying.
- Councilman Feemster stated as long as you limit the crowd and not do it every weekend, he believes this should be fine.
- After more discussion, Council stated they would like for staff to come up with a proposal and application to bring back to Council.

- ❖ No Action Taken by the Committee.

**Council Action on Log No. 135: No Action Taken by the Committee.**

**Budget Work Session – Log No. 172**

- The Committee reviewed the 2021 recreation funding recommendations provided by the Recreation Funding Advisory Board and had detailed discussion. Council had detailed discussion on the definition of recreation and how they have spent money in the past years.
- Administrator Ken Roper reviewed the available Recreation Funding Budget with each district for this Fiscal Year up until June 30, 2021. He stated there will be another \$50,000 deposited to each District on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, if Council decides to leave the budget the same.
- After detailed discussion between District 1’s applications and recommendations, Councilman Ensley Feemster recommends approving the following disbursements from the recreation fund account for District 1.
  - Councilman Ensley Feemster made a motion to amend the Issaquenna Composite request, stating he would like to add an additional \$15,135.50, for a total amount of \$30,271. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner and carried unanimously (6-0).

Council District	Name of Organization	Approved Amount	Additional Recommendations/Comments
1	City of Clemson	\$ 29,705.00	
1	Clemson Aquatic	\$ 5,736.00	
1	Issaquenna Composite	\$ 30,271.00	
DISTRICT 1 TOTAL:		\$ 65,712.00	

- After detailed discussion between District 2’s application and recommendations, Councilman Trey Whitehurst he would like to approve the following disbursements from the recreation fund account for District 2. He stated he is waiting on the recommendations from the Rec Committee on the Town of Six Mile’s application.

Council District	Name of Organization	Approved Amount	Additional Recommendations/Comments
2	Town of Central	\$ 24,500.00	
2	Town of Six Mile	\$ TBD	<i>*Waiting on application and recommendations from Rec. Committee</i>
DISTRICT 2 TOTAL:		\$ 24,500.00	

- After detailed discussion between District 3’s applications and recommendations, Councilman Alex Saitta stated he is not ready to make any recommendations this evening for District 3. He stated he is talking with his applicants and will come back with a recommendation when the Committee discusses Recreation Funding again.
- After detailed discussion between District 4’s applications and recommendations, Vice Chairman Roy Costner recommends approving the following disbursements from the recreation fund account for District 4.
  - Vice Chairman Roy Costner made a motion to amend the Pickens County Airport request, stating he would like to give the Pickens County Airport the remaining District 4 funds, which is \$63,693.00, for the ADA Compliant Playground at the Airport. Motion was seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).
- Vice Chairman Costner stated he will not be approving the recommended amount for the City of Liberty, as Council just gave funds to the City of Liberty Recreation back in February to fix the gymnasium.

Council District	Name of Organization	Approved Amount	Additional Recommendations/Comments
4	Pickens County Airport	\$ 63,693.00	



DISTRICT 4 TOTAL:	\$	63,693.00	
-------------------	----	-----------	--

- After detailed discussion between District 5’s applications and recommendations, Chairman Chris Bowers recommends approving the following disbursements from the recreation fund for District 5.
  - Chairman Chris Bowers state he would like to amend the Committees recommendation, and fund the City of Easley \$23,163.00, instead of the recommend amount. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner and carried unanimously (6-0).
  - Councilman Henry Wilson stated he would like to amend the Committees recommendation, and fund the Pickens County YMCA \$2,500.00 out of District 6 funds, and \$2,500.00 out of District 5 funds, for a total of \$5,000.00. Motion was seconded by Chairman Chris Bowers and carried unanimously (6-0).

Council District	Name of Organization	Approved Amount	Additional Recommendations/Comments
5	Pickens County YMCA	\$ 2,500.00	
5	City of Easley Parks & Rec	\$ 23,163.00	
DISTRICT 5 TOTAL:		\$ 25,663.00	

- After detailed discussion between District 6’s applications and recommendations, Councilman Henry Wilson stated he is not ready to make any other recommendations this evening for District 6 and he would like to continue talking with his applicants before making any recommendations.

Council District	Name of Organization	Approved Amount	Additional Recommendations
6	Pickens County YMCA	\$ 2,500.00	
DISTRICT 6 TOTAL:		\$ 2,500.00	

- ❖ Council recommended the recommendations above for District 1-6, but stated they would like to wait until all other recommendations are made before bringing out of Committee to vote.
- ❖ **No Action Taken by the Committee.**

**Council had detailed discussion on other budgetary items that included, but was not limited to:**

- CAD System Call Reports for Sheriff’s Office (document provided by Chairman Costner)
- Scheduled another Budget Work Session for Tuesday, April 27 to discuss EMS, Rescue, Fire, Library & Roads
- Self-Insurance Discussion
- ❖ **No Action Taken by the Committee.**

**Council Action on Log No. 172:** No Action Taken by the Committee. Chairman Chris Bowers stated Council discussed the Recreation Funding Recommendations and there were a few amendments made. He stated once the Committee came to a decision on all recommendations, those amendments will all be made at once.

**ADJOURN:**

Hearing no further Committee business, Chairman Chris Bowers called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilman Henry Wilson, seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster and carried unanimously (6-0). Meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

## **SOLID WASTE ADHOC COMMITTEE REPORT**

- The committee met on April 13, 2021 via WebEx.
- Councilman Trey Whitehurst made a motion to approve moving allocation funds from Fund Balance to purchase one tractor, and one trailer for Solid Waste. Motion was seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (3-0).
  
- Councilman Henry Wilson stated what they basically discussed at the committee meetings was the idea that we have short term needs, such as folks having to wait in line to dump their trash, issues with capacity at the different stations, etc. and so we specifically talked with the staff about ways that we can have a direct impact immediately but that the impact would be a sustaining impact over a prolonged period of time. He stated in other words, what we can do today to triage the problems that will also have a carry-on effect as we start having discussions about long-term. He stated we set aside the opportunity to talk long-term over a more protracted period where we, as a group, would map out the milestones associated a longer term goal for solid waste in the county. Councilman Wilson stated they would like to come back to Council with a one-page plan with some options associated with it. He stated in the short term, there were some elements associated with what staff had proposed, like the shredder, sorting area, trucks and trailers that make immediate sense to the county for capacity to be more sustainable in the operations. He stated another tractor and trailer would have a direct capacity impact near turn.
  
- After more discussion, Councilman Henry Wilson stated he would like to make a motion to approve the recommendation from the Solid Waste Adhoc Committee. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner. Chairman Bowers asked if there was any discussion:
  - Vice Chairman Costner asked if this is enough and is this going to solve our problem with our truck drivers, who have CDL licenses, and how much we are paying them.
  - Councilman Henry Wilson stated there are multiple elements to it. He stated there is a capacity issue with regards to building transport.
  - Councilman Trey Whitehurst stated we have another meeting coming up that will be more informational. He stated this is something we saw that had to be addressed like yesterday.
  - After more discussion, Councilman Saitta stated this will be \$200,000 for a tractor and \$100,000 for a trailer. He stated including the motion made at the previous Council meeting, that is \$520,000 in total. He asked if that will fix the problem with the loading that is going on with the tractor trailers.
  - Mr. Roper stated it is going to help alleviate. He stated fix is something we are going to have to see and try it. He stated we need to have more capacity there and we think it will trickle through the organization. He stated we believe as a staff this will have a positive impact.
  - After more discussion, Chairman Bowers stated the process has changed. He thanked the subcommittee for their hard work.
  
- Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

## **COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:**

Chairman Chris Bowers announced the following:

- The next Committee of the Whole meeting will be on Monday, May 17, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Conference Room of the Administration Building.
- Chairman Bowers stated that Pickens County Non-Essential Offices will be closed on Monday, May 31, 2021 in observance of the Memorial Day Holiday.
- The next Council Meeting will be held on Monday, June 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. 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 Costner made a motion to constitute first reading in title only of Ordinance 533, to amend the Animal Control Ordinance, then commit to Committee of the Whole for further discussion. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster and carried unanimously (6-0).
- Councilman Henry Wilson made a motion to add “Alcohol Policy on County Facilities” to the agenda this evening. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner and carried unanimously (6-0).
- Vice Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to add “Council Rules/Council Communication” to the Consent Agenda. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner and carried unanimously (6-0).

Seeing no discussion, Chairman Bowers closed the floor.

**PICKENS COUNTY PINNACLE PERFORMER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

Mr. Roper gave a short presentation on how the Pinnacle Performers Program. He recognized Dale Burkett, of Vehicle Maintenance, as the Pickens County Pinnacle Performer of the Year 2020. Mr. Roper gave the following statement to Council,

*“Dale came to work for Pickens County as a Mechanic II in 2001. He was promoted in 2016 to Auto Paint and Body Specialist, the position he holds today.*

*“Dale’s commitment to his job and the County is impeccable,” said Chief Kevin McClain of Emergency Services, who nominated him for the monthly Pinnacle Performer award last year, which he was awarded in May 2020. “The job that Dale performs for the county saves the taxpayers thousands of dollars each year.” He said that not only is Dale’s skill level above average, but that he always has a great attitude and shows a willingness to help others.*

*Vehicle Maintenance Director Toney Chastain, who is Dale’s supervisor, said he is “one of those unique employees that all managers long to have.” He said Dale shows up ready to work earlier than he’s scheduled so that he can open the shop and get it ready for the day. “You never hear a complaint or negative comment from him, and his work ethic and attention to detail are second-to-none. He is in a position that is most often overlooked but without him our fleet of vehicles would not look as good as they always do. He has played a part in keeping all of the vehicles in service for the county. Whether it’s installing all of the decals on the Sheriff’s Office’s vehicles or repairing wreck damaged vehicles, or completely repainting a vehicle or piece of equipment, he goes above and beyond to try to find the most cost effective solutions when performing the body and paint repairs on our fleet of vehicles. I was glad to see Dale win the Pinnacle award. It is well deserved, and it was good to see him be recognized for the outstanding job he does for the county. He is truly an asset to us all.”*

**CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-09 SUPPORTING THE KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL ORGANIZATION IN PICKENS COUNTY AND ESTABLISHING A KEEP PICKENS COUNTY BEAUTIFUL COMMITTEE.**

Chairman Bowers asked for a motion to consider Resolution 2021-09.

- Motion was made by Vice Chairman Costner, and seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster. Seeing no discussion, motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Chairman Bowers read the resolution as followed:

*“WHEREAS, a clean environment contributes to the emotional, physical and economic well-being of our citizens; and*

*WHEREAS litter is harmful to the environment, leaching chemicals into soil and water endangering animal and aquatic habitats; and*

*WHEREAS cleaning up litter, graffiti, junk cars, and illegal dump sites deters criminal activity; and*

*WHEREAS litter prevention education and activities are vital to changing the behavior that causes litter; and*

*WHEREAS Pickens County has an existing Beautification and Environmental Advisory Committee that has promoted education and activities related to beautification and environmental concerns through various activities, including but not limited to the Traveling Trash Bash; and*

*WHEREAS, Keep America Beautiful, Inc. (KAB) is a leading national non-profit organization which envisions a country where every community as clean, green and beautiful place to live; and*

*WHEREAS, KAB provides expertise, programs and resources to help people prevent litter, reduce waste, increase recycling, and protect the natural beauty of the areas around us; and*

*WHEREAS KAB and our Beautification and Environmental Advisory Committee have common goals and could be more efficiently and effectively operated with our existing committee upgrading to a KAB affiliate; and*

*WHEREAS, the Affiliate program, developed by KAB will assist greatly in educating our community about littering behavior, waste handling, and beautification, and thereby enhance community appearance and economic development;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY Pickens County Council that the governing body hereby endorses the organization, and supports the participation with Keep America Beautiful, Inc., and*

*FURTHER, Pickens County Council hereby recognizes the Keep Pickens County Beautiful Committee. Said committee shall be an official committee and shall be accountable to Pickens County Council. The members and chairman of the Keep Pickens County Beautiful Committee shall be volunteers and shall be appointed/elected by Pickens County Council.”*

**CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-10 TO RECOGNIZE PAUL WEST FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE PICKENS COUNTY PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.**

Chairman Bowers asked for a motion to consider Resolution 2021-10.

- Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, and seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson. Seeing no discussion, motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Chairman Bowers read the resolution as followed:

*“WHEREAS, Paul West served as a member of the Pickens County Public Service Commission for from May 2006 until November 2020; and*

*WHEREAS, Mr. West served as Vice Chairman from May 2010 until November 2020; and*

*WHEREAS, during his tenure on the Public Service Commission many significant accomplishments occurred, including:*

- *Consolidation of Wastewater Treatment in Pickens County by closing of Liberty/Cramer WWTP, Daniel WWTP, R.C. Edwards WWTP, and Central South WWTP and expansion of Liberty/Roper WWTP.*
- *Construction of the new 1.8 million dollar Catechee WWTP*
- *Construction of the new 3.6 million dollar Central/North WWTP*

- Construction of the sewer main line to service the new Chastain Road Elementary School and the Pickens County Career and Technology Center
- Construction of the 1.8 million dollar septage receiving station at the Upper Regional WWTP; and

WHEREAS, Paul West's leadership and near perfect attendance at Public Service Commission meetings allowed votes on these projects to go forward, leading to County Council's support for them and resulting in these projects coming to fruition; and

WHEREAS, Mr. West was first appointed to the Public Service Commission in May and because May 16th-22nd is National Public Works Week, it is timely that the County Council chooses to recognize this public servant at this time;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Pickens County Council recognizes the many years of faithful service and congratulates Paul West on his retirement from the Public Service Commission."

**FIRST READING IN TITLE ONLY OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND ACCEPTANCE OF A LEASE FOR LONG SHOALS ROADSIDE PARK.**

Chairman Bowers asked for a motion to constitute first reading in title only of this Ordinance.

- o Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, and seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson. The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

**FIRST READING IN TITLE ONLY OF AN ORDINANCE TO DEVELOP A JOINTLY OWNED AND OPERATED INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK IN CONJUNCTION WITH OCONEE COUNTY, SUCH INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK TO BE GEOGRAPHICALLY LOCATED IN OCONEE COUNTY AND ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SECTION 4- 1-170 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED; TO PROVIDE FOR A WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH OCONEE COUNTY TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE PARK, THE PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE APPLICATION, AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF FEES IN LIEU OF AD VALOREM TAXATION; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO (PROJECT RISE).**

Chairman Bowers asked for a motion to constitute first reading in title only of this Ordinance.

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

**PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE NO. 598 TO PROVIDE FOR ADOPTION OF A BUDGET AMENDMENT CONTAINING ESTIMATES OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE CHANGES FOR PICKENS COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2020 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021.**

Chairman Bowers opened the public hearing for comments regarding Ordinance 598.

Seeing none, Chairman Bowers declared the public hearing closed.

Chairman Bowers asked for a motion to constitute second reading of Ordinance 598.

- o Motion was made by Vice Chairman Roy Costner, seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson. Chairman Bowers asked if there was any discussion:
  - o Councilman Alex Saitta went into discussion on how his primary concern here is the way we vote on these amendments. He stated we voted to approve first reading of these budget amendments, but were not given a copy of the ordinance. Councilman Saitta went into detailed discussion on why Council has three readings on Ordinances, and the Budget Ordinances. He stated he would like to see a one-page amendment income statement.
  - o Vice Chairman Costner stated he agrees with Councilman Saitta, that we are discussing the existing budget and he would like to see this going forward.

- Mr. Roper stated this is not what Council wants to hear, but we do it this way because this is the way we have always done it, and because the budget calendar set this schedule out. He stated our only desire is to do this in a way that this Council wants.
- Mr. Guarino gave a short presentation on how he does the budget amendments and why some of the amendments are blank due to grants, etc.
- Seeing no other discussion, motion carried unanimously (6-0).

**PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE NO. 599 TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES IN PICKENS COUNTY FOR ORDINARY COUNTY PURPOSES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2021, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2022, AND TO DIRECT EXPENDITURE THEREOF.**

Chairman Bowers opened the public hearing for comments regarding Ordinance 599. Seeing none, Chairman Bowers declared the public hearing closed.

Chairman Bowers asked for a motion to constitute second reading of Ordinance 599.

- Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, seconded by Councilman Trey Whitehurst. Chairman Bowers asked if there was any discussion.
  - Chairman Costner stated he would like to amend the motion, and add the Sheriff Office back into the Budget. Motion was seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).

Chairman Bowers asked if there was any other discussion on the original motion:

- Councilman Alex Saitta stated we had a very thorough Budget Notebook but he will not be voting for second reading due to the lack of information given, compared to the information Council received at first reading.
- Mr. Roper stated in the past, we have waited until third reading with a list of budget amendments.
- Chairman Bowers stated communication is key, and if we wait until June to get those, we are behind the eight ball. He stated the new council has been very upfront and open on how they would like information to be given. He stated staff needs to get this information out to Council for them to look over.
- Councilman Saitta gave his suggestion on how he believes the budget calendar should be in the future years.
- Councilman Whitehurst stated we have always done it a certain way, and he likes the idea Councilman Saitta has suggested. He stated as we go into second reading, what we have discussed in the workshops, we go ahead and make those amendments.
- Councilman Henry Wilson stated what Councilman Saitta is talking about seems more sustainable to him.
- Councilman Henry Wilson made a motion to table second reading until the next Council meeting. Motion was seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).

**CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-11 ESTABLISHING GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDS; AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO.**

Chairman Chris Bowers asked for a motion to consider Resolution 2021-11.

- Motion was made by Vice Chairman Costner, and seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster. Chairman Bowers opened the floor for discussion.
  - Chairman Bowers stated that Council learned at one of our last meetings that these funds will be reached for by every member who finds out they are out there. He stated he believes

it is important that this Council comes up with a vision and direction for those funds. He stated this is a great opportunity for one time expenditures, large purchases, etc. and we need to be mindful of that. He stated it is important we get feedback from Administration but we have to remember that there are other overlying goals.

- Councilman Saitta asked if the Administration will give us recommendations or options on how to spend this money.
  - Mr. Roper stated he hopes, as a staff, to give Council a series of things they think is appropriate. He stated we are waiting on guidance from the Fed and instead, we need to start planning.
  - Vice Chairman Costner stated the Federal Guidelines have already been set on how this money can be spent. He stated as long as we are ahead of it is really going to set us up for success.
- After much more discussion between Council, the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

### **UPDATE FROM UPSTATE ALLIANCE**

Mr. John Lumus gave Council a detail presentation on Upstate Alliance. He stated they are the regional Upstate group for the 10 Upstate counties and 9 cities. He presented the following:

- 2020 Announcements
  - ❖ \$1.25B in a new capital investment
  - ❖ 3,017 new job announcements
  - ❖ 57 total announcements
- Marketing Materials refreshed and interactive
- Digital Campaign
- Virtual Events, Real Connections: Fall Consultant Inbound and International COI Gathering
- 2020 Investor Research Requests
  - ❖ 135 public, 129 private, 264 total
- Nationwide searches of “Upstate South Carolina”
  - ❖ Increased 22%
  - ❖ Averaging 4,400 searches per month
- Regain our economic health and continue to adapt and stay ahead
  - ❖ Focus on target industries
  - ❖ Embracing innovation
  - ❖ Welcoming smaller projects
  - ❖ Connecting employers with the talent to make it happen
  - ❖ Maintaining a stable business environment

Council and Mr. Lumus had detailed discussion that included, but was not limited to:

- Companies that Upstate Alliance have brought in by direct recruiting
- Marketing has changed
- Upstate Alliance markets the Upstate region as a whole
- FILOT agreements
- Return on Investment for being a part of Upstate Alliance

### **ALCOHOL POLICY ON COUNTY PROPERTY** *(as added during Motion Period and New Business)*

Councilman Henry Wilson went into discussion on why he would like to move forward with the alcohol policy on county property. He stated he feels it does not degrade the morality or social/cultural value of the community. He stated he feels the people he represents have a very social and conservative viewpoint but in this particular case, such as the Dacusville Art Show, he feels it could benefit and he has heard nothing but positive things about why the county should allow this.

- Councilman Trey Whitehurst made a motion to adopt the policy of Alcohol consumption on county property, pursuant to the rules we have before us this evening and to be administered by staff. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner. Chairman Bowers asked if there was any other discussion.
  - Vice Chairman Costner stated this will help his district with the Performing Arts Center and specific events. He stated he agrees with the policy and likes that it has limited specifications.
  - Councilman Saitta stated he feels it lowers the standard and quality of the product we are offering, and puts a dent in the family-friendly venues that we operate. He stated he wonders what will be next in the future. He stated he will vote against this.
- Seeing no other discussion, the motion carried (4-2), with Chairman Bowers and Councilman Saitta opposed.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Results of Employee Survey – *Committee of the Whole*
2. Overriding Parks and Recreation Plan – *Committee of the Whole*
3. Ordinance 533 – Amend Animal Control Ordinance – *Committee of the Whole*
4. Council Rules/Council Communication – *Committee of the Whole*
  
5. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-12 PROCLAIMING THE WEEK OF MAY 16-22, 2021, AS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK.
6. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-13 PROCLAIMING PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY.
7. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-14 TO RECOGNIZE MAY 16-23, 2021 AS NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK.
8. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-15 RECOGNIZING MAY 2021 AS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH IN PICKENS COUNTY.
9. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-16 PROCLAIMING THE WEEK OF MAY 22-28, 2021 AS SAFE BOATING WEEK.
10. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-17 RECOGNIZING MAY 2021 AS NURSES MONTH IN PICKENS COUNTY.
11. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION 2021-18 RECOGNIZING MAY 3-7, 2021 AS TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK.
  - Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, seconded by Councilman Henry Wilson and carried unanimously (6-0).

### **ADJOURN:**

Hearing no further Council business, Chairman Chris Bowers called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilman Henry Wilson, seconded by Vice Chairman Roy Costner and carried unanimously (6-0). Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 9:19 p.m.



Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

---

Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council

---

Chris Bowers, Chairman of County Council