Pickens County Council Work Session
June 15, 2026
6:30 p.m.

County Council met in a work session, in the Main Conference Room of the County Administration Facility, with Chairman Alex Saitta presiding. Final agendas, bearing date, time, and location of meeting were emailed to members of council and local news media on June 11, 2026.

Council Members in Attendance:
Alex Saitta, Chairman
Chris Lollis, Vice Chairman
Dale Holloway, Vice Chairman Pro-Tem
Claiborne Linvill
Scott Lang
Chris Bowers

Staff in Attendance:
Ken Roper, County Administrator
Destini Pratt, County Attorney
Jessica Varney, Clerk to Council
Allison Fowler, Assistant Administrator

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:
Chairman Alex Saitta called the work session of June 15, 2026, to order and welcomed those in attendance. Councilor Dale Holloway led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

COUNCIL WORK SESSION

A) **Recreation Fund request for District 6 organization**
   a. Councilor Holloway updated Council on a request from Dacusville Community Center, noting the role the center plays in the Dacusville community and countywide. The facility needs various upgrades to the building, classrooms, and ball fields. **Councilor Holloway made a motion to award $10,000 in Rec Funds from District 3. Chairman Saitta seconded the motion** and opened the floor for discussion. Discussion included the timeliness of the request, the current condition of the facility, and the value of activities to neighboring District 3.
   b. Hearing no further discussion, the Chairman called for the vote. **The motion passed unanimously (5-0**, with Councilor Bowers not yet present).

B) **Third reading of an Ordinance No. 683 to provide for the levy of taxes in Pickens County for ordinary county purposes for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, and to direct expenditure thereof.**
   a. Administrator Roper presented an overview of the FY 2027 Budget as presented by staff to Council including the following:
      a) $111,645,000 across all funds
      b) $14 million in department requests over anticipated revenue
      c) Staff offered Balance Budget with No Tax Increase
      d) Included 1% Step Increase for all employees
      e) Included 3% COLA for all employees

        f) Included 10 patrol vehicles for PCSO (increase from 6)
   b. Administrator Roper acknowledged PCSO concerns raised at 3rd Reading regarding market pay levels, starting salaries and staffing levels.
   c. Administrator Roper proposed the following:
        a) Increase budgeted Cost of Living Adjustment for all County Employees to 4% from 3%, bringing the total (with Step) to 5%.
        b) Pay for additional raises with a portion of dedicated millage for Capital
        c) Make up for budgeted Capital purchases with additional allocation from Fund Balance (Cash).
        d) Allocate $62,000.00 from Fund Balance to immediately begin Evergreen updated market study and staffing analysis.
   d. Council and Staff had discussion that included, but was not limited to:
        a) Time in service vs. time in grade and compensation based on outside experience
        b) Pay discrepancies between employees and their supervisors
        c) How to pay for the implementation of the new compensation study
        d) Population increase and need for additional positions
        e) Comparison of local governments starting salaries for deputies
        f) Good financial position because of our Fund Balance
   e. **Chairman Saitta made a motion to approve the budget as presented and the four items proposed by Administrator Roper. Councilor Linvill seconded the motion.**
        a) Councilor Bowers stated for the record he is against the charge for municipalities for disposal of their waste at the county landfill.
        b) Chairman Saitta stated that all municipalities should be treated equally. Currently some cities pay fees while Pickens and Easley do not.
        c) Administrator Roper explained that the fee would split the cost of tipping fees charged at Greenville County for disposal of waste.
   f. **Councilor Bowers made a motion to amend t**o increase the COLA and Step to a total of 6% with the additional portion coming from another half a mil from the dedicated millage for Capital. **Councilor Linvill seconded the motion.**
        a) Council and Staff had discussion that included, but was not limited to any potential Capital purchase impacts.
        b) Chairman Saitta proposed a substitute motion to keep the Capital rate at 3.5 and draw extra for the increase from Fund Balance, but he withdrew the motion.
        c) The **motion to amend passed unanimously (6-0).**
   g. Hearing no further discussion, **the original motion to approve the budget with the four requests outlined by Administrator Roper passed unanimously (6-0).**

C) Public Hearing and Third Reading of an Ordinance No. 685 extending Ordinance No. 675 and continuing, for three months, the temporary moratorium on the acceptance and processing of permit applications for commercial lodging establishments, solar farms, and within the highway 8 corridor, major subdivisions consisting of three (3) lots or more and multifamily dwellings (including townhomes, condominiums, apartments, duplexes and triplexes).
   a. Chairman Saitta opened the Public Hearing. Hearing no public comments, he closed the Public Hearing.
   b. **Chairman Saitta made a motion to approve Third Reading of Ordinance No. 685** extending Ordinance No. 675. **Councilor Bowers seconded the motion** and it **passed unanimously (6-0).**

D) EMS Medic 1 Alternatives

a. Administrator Roper outlined the history of costs for the proposed Medic 1 building:
    a) Cost Estimate PALACIO dated 1/6/25: $1,546,818.00
    b) FY2026 Budget for Project: $1,500,000.00
    c) Spangler Construction dated 02/16/26 Recommend CMAR approach, estimate: $1,310,000.00
    d) LCK CMAR Manager Budget dated 06/12/26: $1,233,472.00
b. **Councilor Linvill made the motion to move forward with the building of Medic 1. Chairman Saitta seconded the motion.**
c. Discussion included, but was not limited to:
    a) The rising costs of materials and the need to get started on the project.
    b) The change in the procurement process requires additional approval.
    c) Work the county could do in house to lower cost.
    d) Progress made in EMS and the facilities they work in.
d. **The motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

E) Second reading of an Ordinance No. 684 establishing a Lake Keowee and Lake Jocassee overlay district to protect water quality, conserve natural resources, safeguard drinking water and other matters related thereto.

a. Assistant Administrator Allison Fowler and County Attorney Destini Pratt were recognized by Administrator Roper. Assistant Administrator Fowler presented the draft document noting research of regulations in other counties and feedback from the public and stakeholders.
b. The stakeholders engaged in the process: Duke Energy, Upstate Forever, SCDNR, Naturaland Trust, Lake Keowee Sourcewater Protection Team, Greenville Water, Pickens Regional Joint Water System, Keowee Anglers Club, Shi Institute, FOLKS, Advocates for Quality Development, The Nature Conservancy.
c. Vice Chairman Lollis asked to see more about environmental protections and less about commercial development.
d. Councilor Linvill confirmed with staff that the Development Area Map would apply to the area.
e. Chairman Saitta stepped through the proposed ordinance:
    a) In the current draft, heavy industrial is prohibited but light industrial is not prohibited. **Chairman Saitta made a motion** to prohibit all industrial uses. **Vice Chairman Lollis seconded** for discussion. Discussion included potential to affect small businesses, such as a machine shop. Councilor Bowers voiced disagreement to allow for instances of small light industrial (garage shop). **Councilor Linvill made a motion to amend** to include "prohibition of industrial with language for exceptions as provided by staff." **Councilor Bowers seconded.** The **amended motion passes 5-1 with Vice Chairman Lollis opposed**. Chairman Saitta called for a vote on the original motion of prohibiting all industrial with language from administration. **The motion passed unanimously (6-0).**
    b) In the current draft, there are three categories for commercial: water-dependent businesses, water-related businesses, water-enhanced businesses. Councilor Linvill stated she would like water-related businesses to also be reviewed by the Board of Appeals (BOA). Councilor Bowers agreed. Chairman and Vice Chairman expressed they would support no commercial. There was discussion of the appeal process. Councilors Lang and Holloway agreed with sending water-related businesses to go to BOA. **Councilor Linvill made a motion** to change 6.2 to "may be permitted." **Councilor Bowers seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-2 with Chairman Saitta and Vice Chairman Lollis opposed.**

c) Council discussed residential restrictions. **Chairman Saitta made a motion** that residential development should be limited to single-family homes and not multi-family homes. **Vice Chairman Lollis seconded the motion**. Councilor Linvill and Councilor Bowers expressed their disagreement. Chairman Saitta called for a vote. **The motion passed 4-2 with Councilors Bowers and Linvill opposed.**

d) Councilor Linvill raised a question about fertilizer runoff. Assistant Administrator Fowler stated that Director Kyle Bennett had proposed regulations that would be considered a "gold standard." **Councilor Linvill made a motion** to have staff add language protecting use of chemicals, run off protections and other land management that may affect the watershed. **The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Lollis**. Councilor Bowers stated his support of protections to protect the water. The Chaiman asked who would enforce these regulations. Assistant Administrator Fowler confirmed that would be under Stormwater. **The motion passed unanimously (6-0).**

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further Council business, Chairman Saitta made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chris Bowers and carried unanimously (6-0). Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectively Submitted:

Jessica Varney

Jessica Varney, Clerk to Council

Approved:

Alex Saitta, Chairman of County Council