

Regular Pickens County Council Meeting
May 5, 2025
6:30 PM

County Council met in regular session, in the Auditorium 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 May 1, 2025. The agenda was posted in the lobby of the County Administration Building and on the County website the required length of time.

Council Members in Attendance:

Alex Saitta, Chairman
Chris Lollis, Vice Chairman
Dale Holloway, Vice Chairman Pro-Tem
C. Claiborne Linvill
Scott Lang
Chris Bowers

Staff in Attendance:

Ken Roper, County Administrator
Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Alex Saitta called the meeting of May 5, 2025, to order and welcome those in attendance. Councilman Chris Bowers led the invocation and Boy Scouts Troup 51 led the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK ON MAY 18-25, 2025: Chief of Emergency Services, Billy Gibson

Mr. Billy Gibson, Chief of Emergency Services, recognized Ms. Joan E. Davis for her many years of service to Pickens County Emergency Medical Services. Emergency Medical Services Week is May 18-25, 2025.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairman Alex Saitta opened the Public Forum and requested the Clerk to call upon the citizens signed up to speak.

1. Angie Farmer: Ms. Farmer gave an update to the Council regarding the Behavioral Health Services of Pickens County.
2. Peter Greenberger: Mr. Greenberger addressed the Council regarding the annexation laws.
3. Matthew Lusk: Mr. Lusk addressed the Council regarding property in Pickens County.
4. Ensley Feemster: Mr. Feemster addressed the Council regarding his service on the ACOG Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Alex Saitta called for a motion to approve the following minutes as presented:

- April 7, 2025- Council Meeting
- April 17, 2025- EMS Ad hoc Committee
- April 21, 2025- Council Work Session

- Motion was made by Chairman Alex Saitta and seconded by Councilman Chris Bowers to approve the minutes. The motion was carried unanimously (6-0).

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT:

The Administrator, Ken Roper, addressed the Council on the following:

- County Projects Update
 - ❖ Emergency Services Projects
 - ❖ Public Works Projects
 - ❖ Building Projects
 - ❖ General Projects
- Recognition of \$1 million in assets sold on GovDeals

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None

MOTION PERIOD AND NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Alex Saitta opened the floor for motion period and new business. Seeing no discussion, Chairman Saitta closed the floor.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING AND/OR RESOLUTIONS:

- A) FIRST READING IN TITLE ONLY OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AN AGREEMENT RESPECTING AN INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK DEVELOPED IN CONJUNCTION WITH OCONEE COUNTY, SUCH INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK BEING GEOGRAPHICALLY LOCATED IN OCONEE COUNTY AND ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SECTION 4-1-170 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.
- Chairman Saitta made a motion to approve first reading in title only of this Ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilman Chris Bowers and carried unanimously (6-0).

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING AND/OR PUBLIC HEARING:

- A) PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE No. 661 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, 2024 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2025.
 - a. Chairman Saitta gaveled into public hearing and asked if anyone would like to speak this evening regarding this Ordinance. Seeing no speakers, Chairman Saitta closed the floor.

- Chairman Alex Saitta made a motion to constitute second reading of this Ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilman Chris Bowers and carried unanimously (6-0).

B) PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING ORDINANCE No. 662 TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES IN PICKENS COUNTY FOR ORDINARY COUNTY PURPOSES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2026, AND TO DIRECT EXPENDITURE THEREOF.

- Chairman Saitta gaveled into public hearing and asked if anyone would like to speak this evening regarding this Ordinance. Seeing no speakers, Chairman Saitta closed the floor..
 - Councilman Bowers questioned the Library budget and roads fund since it had not been discussed.
- Chairman Saitta made a motion to constitute second reading of this Ordinance as proposed. Motion was seconded by Councilman Scott Lang. Discussion included:
 - Chairman Saitta made an amended motion to put the library operations in the general fund budget and withdraw the offer for the \$1 million capital loan that was made in June 2023. Motion was seconded by Councilman Chris Lollis. Discussion included:
 - ❖ Discussion on Act 388
 - ❖ Other departments on millage
 - ❖ Current Library budget on millage
 - After more discussion, Chairman Saitta called for the vote. The motion carried (4-2), with Councilman Bowers and Councilor Linvill opposed.
 - Chairman Saitta made an amended motion to lower the property tax rate from 9.9 mils to 5.3 mils. He stated if this passes, the 5.3 mils will remain and fund road maintenance. The 4.6 mil reduction in the operation rate will stop funding that road reserve fund that he believes violates the state cap. Motion was seconded Councilman Chris Lollis. Discussion included:
 - Discussion on Road Maintenance Fund
 - Discussion on Road Reserve Fund
 - Councilman Bowers made a substitute motion to scrap the entire road millage off the board and come up with a formula for the unincorporated areas of the county so that the municipalities can pass their own millage to pave their roads. The motion was seconded by Councilor Linvill. The motion failed (2-4) with Chairman Saitta, Councilman Holloway, Councilman Lollis and Councilman Lang opposed.
 - After more discussion, the amended motion carried (4-2), with Councilor Linvill and Councilman Bowers opposed.
 - The original motion of second reading of the budget (as amended) carried (4-2), with Councilor Linvill and Councilman Bowers opposed.

ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING AND/OR PUBLIC HEARING:

A) PUBLIC HEARING AND THIRD READING OF AN ORDINANCE No. 658 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 SHAKER).

- a. Chairman Saitta gaveled into public hearing and asked if anyone would like to speak this evening regarding this Ordinance. Seeing no speakers, Chairman Saitta closed the floor.
- o Chairman Saitta made a motion to approve third reading of this Ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilman Chris Bowers and carried unanimously (6-0).

B) PUBLIC HEARING AND THIRD READING OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 34 OF THE PICKENS COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES SO AS TO INCLUDE LITTER CONTROL AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

- o Chairman Saitta made a motion to constitute third reading of this Ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilor Claiborne Linvill.
 - o Councilman Chris Lollis amended the motion to change Section 34-86 (1)(a)(iii) to 30 days, instead of 15 days. Motion was seconded by Chairman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).
- o Seeing no other discussion, the motion carried (6-0).

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS:

A) UPDATE FROM PICKENS COUNTY VETERAN AFFAIRS OFFICE: Walt Carter

- a. Walt Carter, General Governor Affairs Officer, gave an update to Council regarding the Veteran Affairs Office and the upcoming event for the Wall that Heals, Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Replica & Mobile Education Center on May 15-18, 2025. The event will be held in Liberty SC at Deer Wood Farms.
 - i. Discussion included:
 - 1. Question regarding whether the VA Office receives Federal Funding
 - 2. Greatest need in the VA Office

B) RECREATION FUNDING APPLICATIONS IN DISTRICT 4 AND DISTRICT 6

- o Councilman Dale Holloway made a motion to allocate \$34,500 of District 6 Recreation Funding to Dacusville Recreation. Motion was seconded by Chairman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).

- Councilman Scott Lang made a motion to allocate \$50,550 of District 4 Recreation Funding to the City of Liberty Recreation. Motion was seconded by Chairman Alex Saitta and carried unanimously (6-0).

C) **PRESENTATION OF CIVIC PLUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS SOFTWARE:** Clerk to Council, Meagan Nations

- a. Clerk to Council, Meagan Nations, presented on the Civic Plus Boards and Commissions Software. This software will replace the current software we use, which is Matchboard. The Civic Plus software is cheaper and will run more smoothly with our Civic Plus Agenda Management Software.

CONSENT AGENDA

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: S.C. Code of Laws, Section 30-4-70 (a):

Chairman Alex Saitta called for a motion to convene into Executive Session as defined by S.C. Code of Laws, Section 30-4-70 (a). Chairman Saitta further stated that each issue would be discussed as the Law provides.

Personnel: Section 30-4-70 (a)(1)

- County Attorney
- Motion was made by Chairman Alex Saitta and seconded by Councilman Chris Lollis. The motion was carried out unanimously (6-0), to convene in executive session for the stated purposes after a five-minute recess.

ACTION AS NEEDED VIA EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:

Chairman Alex Saitta called the Public Session back to Order and advised the following:

Personnel: Section 30-4-70 (a)(1) - County Attorney

Councilor Claiborne Linvill stated that earlier this year, Council determined the need for the county to have a full-time attorney. She stated our previous attorney had been working as a contract. She stated the position will be listed tomorrow and we look forward to reviewing applicants with the goal of having a full-time county attorney starting in July.

Mr. Roper introduced Ms. Kim Wunder, who will fill in as interim County Attorney until the full-time position is hired.

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further Council business, Councilman Chris Bowers made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scott Lang and carried (6-0). Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 9:04 p.m.