

Pickens County Council Work Session

June 16, 2025

6:30 p.m.

County Council met in a work session, in the Main Conference Room of the County Administration Facility, with Councilman Alex Saitta presiding. Final agendas, bearing date, time, and location of meeting were emailed to members of council and local news media on June 12, 2025

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

Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council

Allison Fowler, Assistant Administrator

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Alex Saitta called the work session of June 16, 2025, to order and welcomed those in attendance. Dr. Dale Holloway led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

COUNTY ATTORNEY UPDATE

Mr. Roper gave an update on the search for a County Attorney. He stated Councilor Linvill, Councilor Lang, himself and the Clerk to Council are on the interview committee. He stated we have interviewed two candidates, and we think as a committee, we need to interview at least three people. Mr. Roper advised there is some interviews scheduled in the next few weeks and our goal is to have someone on board as soon as possible.

CONSERVATION BANK RULES

Assistant Administrator, Allison Fowler, gave the Council a brief overview of the Conservation Bank. She stated the bank was established with the Highway 11 Ordinance in late 2022, and we have updated the rules, most recently in March 2024. They have worked with Naturaland Trust and Upstate Forever on the rules and they have recommended following Greenville County's model, which we have mostly done. She stated she would like to propose a staff committee to review applications, rather than have a separate board, since we expect fewer applications and have less funding – around \$300,000 currently. Ms. Fowler stated staff has created a draft scoring worksheet where each staff committee member would score applications individually and bring recommendations to Council.

Discussion included, but was not limited to:

- Explanation of Conservation Bank
- Explanation of Funding
- Council approval of the rules is required by the Ordinance

- Chairman Alex Saitta made a motion to defer to the next meeting and incorporate the following changes in the draft copy of the resolution: lower to \$50,000, remove Pickens County and its municipalities, and strike C & D in historical criteria. Motion was seconded by Councilman Bowers. The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

SCENIC HIGHWAY 11

Mr. Roper stated this Ordinance was passed in 2022 and involved several public hearings. He stated the entire corridor has a thousand-foot area defined on both sides of the roads. He stated when it gets to Keowee Toxaway State Park, it stops so it does not make much sense.

Discussion included, but was not limited to:

- Discussion on Section 1, 2(c) – *“Areas within 1000 feet of the shoreline of Lake Keowee are excluded from the heritage area.”*
- ❖ Chairman Saitta made a motion for first reading in title only, and to strike the line in Section 1, 2(c) from the Ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilor Linnell.
 - Chairman Saitta amended his motion to strike the two paragraphs in Section 3, and it read, “Industrial Uses are prohibited in the Heritage Area.” Motion was seconded by Councilman Scott Lang.
 - Discussion included:
 - Discussion between industrial, commercial and manufacturing
 - Redefining of definition that would not penalize mom and pop shops
 - The amended motion carried (5-1), with Councilman Chris Bowers opposed.
 - ❖ The original motion carried (5-1), with Councilman Chris Bowers opposed.

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.

Contractual: Section 30-4-70(a)(5)

- **Sewer Plant Update**

Boards and Commissions: Section 30-4-70(a)(1)

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

ACTION AS NEEDED VIA EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:

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

Contractual: Section 30-4-70(a)(5)

- **Sewer Plant Update** – Chairman Alex Saitta made a motion to deny request from town of Central, addressed from May 12, as it relates to sewer plant update. Motion was seconded by Councilman Chris Lollis and carried unanimously (6-0).

Boards and Commission: Section 30-4-70(a)(1)

- **Boards and Commissions** – No Action Taken

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further Council business, Councilman Chris Bowers made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scott Lang and carried unanimously (6-0). Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council

Alex Saitta, Chairman of County Council