

Pickens County Council Work session

February 18, 2025

6:30 p.m.

County Council met in a work 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 February 13, 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

Les Hendricks, Contract Attorney

Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council (absent)

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Alex Saitta called the work session of February 18, 2025, to order and welcomed those in attendance. Vice Chairman Chris Lollis led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSIDERATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDING FOR COMMERCE PARK WATERLINE

Chairman Saitta stated Mr. Roper will provide a brief history and timeline of the two industrial sites we currently have. He will also cover what else is needed to prepare them for presentation to prospective companies, followed by a discussion on the waterline request.

Mr. Roper presented Council with a map of three major pieces of property: Pickens County Commerce Park, Farmhouse site, and Big Dog site. He went into discussion on purchases of each site. Specifically, the Farmhouse site, where he stated we have applied for a grant to build the waterline to the Farmhouse site, which is in Southside Water District. He stated Southside Water is the water provider in this area, and we have applied for a 75% grant to fund the \$1.8 million needed to build the water line. The grant was awarded, and Southside Water District has agreed to match the remaining 25%, which totals \$600,000. The County will contribute \$300,000 of that match, pending Council's approval. He stated the ask tonight is to move forward with the next step for the Farmhouse site, which involves securing the necessary funds for the water line and continuing to develop the site for future industries.

Council and Staff discussion included, but was not limited to:

- Fire protection in the area

After more discussion, Councilor Claiborne Linvill made a motion accept this grant as presented. Motion was seconded by Councilman Chris Lollis. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

RECYCLING CENTERS AND SOLID WASTE

Mr. Roper stated our recycling program is something we continue to monitor closely. He introduced the Solid Waste Director, Steve Raines, and Public Works Director, Rodney Robinson. Mr. Raines gave a review of recycling centers.

Council and staff went into discussion that included, but was not limited to:

- Evaluating property around Willow Springs recycling center to expand eventually
- Evaluating property at Midway recycling center to possibly find a larger site nearby and build a new facility, due to significant growth in the area
- Status of recycling bins
- Status of truck drivers
- Status of recycling station attendants
- Sheriff's Office Deputies driving through recycling stations
- Items accepted at Recycling Centers
- Discussion on Traveling Trash Bash/Keep Pickens County Beautiful Committee
- Discussion on creating a policy for how cities should manage waste and what should be charged
- Discussion on replacing the brush grinder

After much more discussion, Councilman Chris Bowers made a motion to purchase a brush grinder, at a cost of \$1,268,848, out of general fund for the Landfill. Motion was seconded by Councilman Alex Saitta. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

RECREATION FUNDING PROCEDURES

Council and Staff had detailed discussion that included, but was not limited to:

- Discussion on creating a draft of guidelines for allocating recreational funding
- Discussion on funding mechanism
- Past questions on the application are based on previous council requests
- Discussion on some districts have different access to recreational opportunities
- Discussion on how limited funds are only allocated for recreation, with no flexibility for other community needs
- Discussion on importance of transparency and rules
- Discussion on carrying over unspent funding

Councilman Alex Saitta made a motion to task staff to start working on the amended Ordinance for Recreation Funding, stating he would like the following to be added: must be recreational activity, funding for non-profit or government entities only (no for-profits), funding for events or capital projects (excluding salaries and operating expense), and must include written estimates and proof of proper use. Motion was seconded by Councilman Chris Bowers.

- Councilor Claiborne Linvill made an amended motion to strike 28-19 in the original ordinance. Motion was seconded by Councilman Chris Bowers and carried unanimously (6-0).

The original motion carried (6-0).

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further Council business, Chairman Alex Saitta made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Dale Holloway and carried unanimously (6-0). Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

Meagan Nations, Clerk to Council

Alex Saitta, Chairman of County Council