

**City of Pickens
Regular Meeting
June 23, 2025
6:00 P.M.**

The Mayor and City Council convened at City Hall 219 Pendleton Street, Pickens S.C. for a Regular Meeting. Agendas were posted and sent to media on June 19, 2025.

Council Members in Attendance:

Mayor, Isaiah Scipio
Mayor Pro-Tem Cameron Rivers
Council Member, Floyd Rogers
Council Member, John McManus
Council Member, Ray Wilson
Council Member Allie Winter

Staff:

Administrator Tim O'Briant
Attorney, Daniel Hughes
Finance Director, Mandy Hess
Fire Chief, Chris Elrod
Recreation Director, Jonathon Morris

(The minutes are a synopsis of the meeting, and they are not a verbatim discussion. Full viewing and recording of the meeting is available on the City of Pickens Web-page and Facebook. Also, the full agenda packet with all departmental reports are available in the City Clerk's office).

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Scipio called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. Mayor Scipio gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR SCIPIO:

Mayor Scipio thanked the City Attorney, Daniel Hughes, for being in attendance and stated Attorney Hughes plans to be in attendance every work session.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS: None.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Administrator Tim O'Briant reported on the following items to the Mayor, Council and public.

- Heat Wave - Mr. O'Briant cautioned everyone about the heat wave. Mr. O'Briant stated there is a cooling station at Pickens Recreation (11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) Council was informed that staff is being watchful of employees who are working outdoors. These schedules may fluctuate if needed.
- FY 2022/2023 Audit - The Public and Council were informed that the Accountants were confident they have identified the unreconciled funds and are comfortable with a \$20,000 difference. The unreconciled amount was originally \$157,000. The Auditors have stated they will give the final confirmation, but they have agreed these transactions appear to be

resolved. Council will retain the \$50,000 that was budgeted for a possible forensic accountant.

- July 4th celebrations – The City will do the fireworks on Saturday July 5, and the Amphitheater will open at 4:00 p.m. with entertainment from multiple bands.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

May 19th, 2025, Regular Meeting
May 21st, 2025, Budget Work Session
May 28th, 2025, Council Work Session
May 28th, 2025, Budget Work Session
June 4, 2025, Budget Work Session
June 11th, 2025, Budget Work Session
June 16th, 2025, Special Called Meeting – moved to the meeting of July 14, 2025, for approval.

>Council Member John McManus moved to approve the minutes of 5/19, 5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and June 11, 2025. Motion was seconded by Council Member Floyd Rogers and unanimously approved.

Council did not receive the 6/16/2025 minutes in the packet. Those minutes will be on the 7/14/2025 agenda.

PRESENTATION REGARDING THE CITY OF PICKENS REDESIGNED WEBSITE:

Bryan Owens went over the highlights of the redesigned website.

- Quick-Access Navigation
- Public Meetings and Council information.
- Online Payments & Forms
- Water & Utility Resources
- Alerts & Announcements
- Community Events

The Website is on track to be launched in the first part of July. It is the goal for this website to be more user friendly and for citizens to be able to find information efficiently.

>>Council discussed Freedom of Information requests, Ordinances, County GIS mapping, and agendas/minutes for other boards and commissions such as the Planning Commission. Council Member Rogers asked about FOIA and council emails. Emails were discussed and will not be on the website.

Council thanked Bryan Owens for the presentation.

APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITH CITY ATTORNEY FOR LEGAL SERVICES:

Motion was made by Council Member Floyd Rogers and seconded by Council Member Allie Winter to approve the contract for legal services.

>>During Council discussion, Council Member Floyd Rogers inquired about the proper way for individual Council Members to communicate with the attorney. Attorney Hughes stated he was employed by the City to provide legal advice, in the event an individual member of Council contacts him, he will provide information back to the entire Council. Mr. Hughes stated with the exception of one city, all of the cities he represents are under the council form of government. Most of the time it works well for council members to funnel information to the Administrator and the City Administrator can communicate with the Attorney. Council Member John McManus concurred this would be a best practice. Mr. Hughes stated this is an efficient way to communicate, but it does not mean that individuals cannot call or email the Attorney.

Mr. Hughes will be in attendance once a month for the Council Work Sessions. If he cannot be in attendance, another attorney from his practice will attend.
>>>the motion on the floor was called for a vote. All members unanimously voted in favor of the contract for legal services.

PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2025-02 FY 2025/2026 BUDGET ORDINANCE:

Mayor Scipio opened the Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 2025-02. Mayor Scipio encouraged any comments from the citizens. Hearing none, the Public Hearing was closed.

APPROVAL OF SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2025-02 FY 2025/2026 BUDGET ORDINANCE:

>>Motion was made by Council Member John McManus and seconded by Council Member Ray Wilson that this constitutes a second reading of Ordinance No. 2025-02, FY 2025/2026 Budget Ordinance.

- 1) Council Member John McManus moved to amend the budget to include a clean-up fee for the Amphitheater at \$50.00. Council Member Ray Wilson seconded the amendment. Council Member Allie Winter stated she thought the Amphitheater should be \$100.00. Both Mr. McManus and Mr. Wilson concurred to amend the amount to \$100.00 Clean-up fee for the Amphitheater.

>>All Members of Council voted in favor of the amendment.

>>During further discussion, Council Member Allie Winter received clarification on vehicles relating to Enterprise. And clarified the City will be hiring (2) positions for code enforcement. Council Member Cameron Rivers stated he was not confident that (2) positions were needed. Both Council Members McManus and Rogers debated there is a need for (2) positions. Mayor Scipio stated if Council decides in the future that both positions are not needed, Council will make that adjustment.

Recess:

Council Member John McManus moved for a 5-minute recess. Motion was seconded by Council Member Allie Winter and unanimously passed. Council Recessed at 7:12 p.m.

Reconvene:

Council Member Allie Winter moved to reconvene from Recess. Motion was seconded by Council Member Floyd Rogers and unanimously passed. Council reconvened at 7:19 p.m.

>>Budget Deliberations continued with Council Member Cameron Rivers inquiring about the establishment of fire fees. Tim O'Briant explained that all the information has now been provided by the County and the exact number of parcels are being accounted for within the City Limits. Council discussed the 4%, 6% and the 10% assessment, vacant land, and exempt properties.

Council Member Cameron Rivers also clarified that he was not against the budgeted pay increases but thought there would be more review. Mr. Rivers stated he does not agree with the contract with Fleet Management. And he is opposed to the purchase of the Dalton Property. Mr. Rivers concluded his comments on the FY 2025/2026 budget by stating he is concerned about Reserve Funds and doing business with borrowed money.

>>Hearing no further discussion, Mayor Scipio called for the vote on the 2025/2026 Budget Ordinance No. 2025-02 as amended. All members voted in favor of the budget as amended with the exception of Council Member Cameron Rivers who opposed. Motion carried 5-1. This constitutes Second and Final Reading of the Budget as amended.

PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2025-05 TO AMEND ARTICLE I (IN GENERAL) OF CHAPTER 7-3 FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION OF THE CITY OF PICKENS CODE OF ORDINANCES:

Mayor Scipio opened the Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 2025-05. Mayor Scipio encouraged any comments from the citizens.

- 1) Pat Mulky – Mr. Mulky asked if there was consideration of re-assessments of industrial properties, or would the fee be based on Pickens County’s assessment. Mr. O’Briant stated this would be based on County Assessments.

Hearing no further comments, the Public Hearing for Ordinance NO. 2025-05 was closed.

APPROVAL OF SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2025-05 TO AMEND ARTICLE I (IN GENERAL) OF CHAPTER 7-3 FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION OF THE CITY OF PICKENS CODE OF ORDINANCES:

Motion was made by Council Member Allie Winter, seconded by Council Member Floyd Rogers to approve Second and Final reading of Ordinance No. 2025-05.

- 1) Council Member Floyd Rogers moved to amend section 7-3 (d) to state-All fire protection fees collected shall be deposited into a separate and segregated fund and shall be used solely for the operational and capital needs of the Pickens Fire Department, as required by South Carolina Code 6-1-330 (D). an annual report on fire fee revenue and expenditures shall be published and made publicly available including on the City of Pickens website, in compliance with 6-1-330 (F).

Amendment was seconded by Council Member Allie Winter. All members voted in favor of the amendment.

>>Council Member Allie Winter asked about the fire protection fees going to properties that are not currently billed. Chief Elrod gave a breakdown of (39) properties that are churches or places of worship and vacant land; there are (12) properties that are exempt/nonprofits; and (2) low-income housing that currently are assessed at 0% but would be receiving a charge for fire fees. Council Member John McManus inquired about the 0% and the formula to obtain billing. Mr. McManus stated he was unaware there were 0% housing that were exempt from property taxes. Tim O’Briant stated the City needs to go through a year with the new assessed values and determine next year where there may need to be appraisals. Currently the City has 2024 values.

Council Member Floyd Rogers inquired about the County doing our billing. Tim O’Briant stated the County will add our fee structure to the tax bills and will not charge. It will be the City’s responsibility to give them a report and addresses for billing.

>>Mayor Scipio called for the vote. All Council Members voted in favor that this constitute Second and Final Reading of Ordinance No. 2025-05 as amended.

DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 2025-R1 OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PICKENS AFFIRMING THAT THE CITY SHALL NOT REQUIRE ANNEXATION FOR THE PROVISION OF CITY SERVICES, AND SHALL ONLY ANNEX PROPERTY UNDER THE 100% VOLUNTARY METHOD AS PROVIDED UNDER SOUTH CAROLINA LAW, WHILE ENCOURAGING ANNEXATION IN CERTAIN UNINCORPORATED AREAS WHERE CITY SERVICES PROVIDE A VALUE PROPOSITION:

Council Member Floyd Rogers moved to postpone this item without discussion and forward this to the next work session of July 28, 2025. Mr. McManus gave the second.

It was determined that Council's next work session was August 25, 2025. Mr. Rogers withdrew the motion for the July 28th work session and stated the same motion but to forward this item to the August 25, 2025, work session. Motion was seconded by Council Member Allie Winter and unanimously passed.

DISCUSSION AS IT RELATES TO CITY PARKING:

Mayor Scipio stated this issue was brought to the attention of Council regarding a property owner on Court Street and Courthouse staff parking in front of the business. Mayor Scipio stated he thought this issue should be cautiously handled as Council does not want to make legislative decisions for individual property owners.

Attorney Hughes concurred and stated Council needs to benefit the City as a whole and not individual property owners.

Council Member Floyd Rogers stated he has been working on this issue and Court Street is a City owned Street. He has researched many laws as it relates to City owned streets. Mr. Rogers inquired how Council felt about Court Street being a one-way street with angled parking, and 2-hour time limits. Council Member Allie Winter stated Council should start looking at parking for the entire business district and not only Court Street. She is also in favor of Monday – Saturday time limits. Council Member John McManus stated the Council can draft legislation to deal with Court Street alone. Mr. Hughes stated the City has an Ordinance that only deals with Main Street. Therefore, there could be several solutions. Mr. McManus also pointed out that State Law provides the City has jurisdiction over all City Streets.

Tim O'Briant informed Council that during one of the Comprehensive Plan meetings with business owners, parking was a topic of discussion. Business owners did want the Domino's public parking lot more assessable, and they also wanted more turnover in the parking on Main Street, which timed parking would allow. Mr. O'Briant also discussed the methods of enforcement using video and Artificial Intelligence surveillance.

Council will review this item during the August 25, 2025 Work Session. Mr. O'Briant will also be in discussions with the County as there are possibilities for more parking.


COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL:

The Mayor and all Council Members thanked the staff and applauded one another for the efforts that was put in place to pass this year's budget. Mr. O'Briant also declared admiration for the many work sessions and stated the Mayor and Council have put in the work and completed an excellent budget.

ADJOURNMENT:

Hearing no further business, Mayor Scipio called for the motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Council Member Allie Winter, seconded by Council Member Rogers, and unanimously approved to adjourn. Pickens City Council stood adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:


Donna F. Owen, City Clerk

Approved:


Isaiah Scipio, Mayor