

**City of Pickens  
Work Session  
Monday April 28, 2025  
6:00 P.M.**

The Mayor and City Council convened at City Hall 219 Pendleton Street, Pickens S.C. for a Work Session. Agendas were posted and sent to media on April 25, 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  
Finance Director, Mandy Hess  
Chief of Police, Randal Beach  
Fire Chief, Chris Elrod

***(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 took a few moments to thank all the City Council members and City Staff for their work and dedication to Pickens.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

Tim O'Briant informed the Mayor, Council and the public of the following items.

- SC Department of Environmental Services has sent a letter to the Mayor citing the consent order previously placed on the City has been closed as of April 21, 2025. Mr. O'Briant reminded everyone that this consent order was due to drinking water, and now Pickens is fully on the Greenville water system, the drinking water is in compliance, and the consent order closed.
- Pickens County has sent notice; they will stop doing stormwater permitting/planning within the City of Pickens as of 7/1/2025. The County will continue outreach and education for stormwater. This has been sent to the City Attorney for review.

**PRESENTATION OF FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026 BUDGET:**

Mr. O'Briant presented the Mayor, Council, and the Public with a balanced budget with no tax increase or increase to water, sewer, and sanitation. Council reviewed revenues and expenditures. Mr. O'Briant highlighted the following items for the budget.

- Salary adjustments/compensation plan
- Additional funds for community events/festivals
- Additional \$2,000 per council member to support local non-profits at their discretion
- Heavy equipment for Public Works and Recreation
- Continued emphasis on new vehicle management
- Funding to complete the parking lot in downtown near Dominoes and add EV stations
- Projects at the Teen Canteen for future meeting space and utilize the outside for Pickleball

>Mayor Scipio stated Council can make some comments about the presentation of the budget, but meetings will be scheduled for the budget details.

>During discussion Council Member McManus stated the \$2,000 discretionary funds were not in the best interest for a Council that is elected as a whole and not by districts. When funding a non-profit, these should be decisions of the entire Council. Council Member Allie Winter concurred; this should be decided as a group.

>Council Member John McManus asked about the Water Treatment Plant. Mr. O'Briant clarified that the Water Treatment Plant is completely shut down.

The Mayor and Council thanked Tim O'Briant and Mandy Hess for all the work that has gone into the new budget. (Work Sessions will be upcoming)

#### **CONSIDERATION OF ENTERPRISE FLEET MANAGEMENT PROGRAM:**

Mr. Richard Bailey gave a presentation to Council as it relates to the vehicle needs of the Police and Public works departments. The presentation contained fleet profile, planning analysis, maintenance, and fuel support. *(full presentation and video available)*

Mr. Bailey stated that since his last presentation, the City of Wahalla have become the newest municipal clients. Lt. Nalley from Pickens Police has visited Wahalla. He was impressed with the fleet.

Police Chief Beach did a presentation regarding the Tahoe engine and provided information as it relates to idling time of police vehicles. The Tahoe's are preferred, as they rate well in safety and resale. Chief Beach also spoke about upfitting the vehicles could be minimized in many cases.

Council clarified that it was acceptable to mix the vehicles in the fleet. Council discussed the variables of the Tahoe and Ford Explorer. Council Member Winter stated she has communicated with the City of Wahalla, and they were positive with their experience in this program.

>>Mayor Scipio stated that Council can vote to enter into a program with Fleet Management in principle and make changes as desired.

>>Motion was made by Council Member Floyd Rogers to enter into agreement with Enterprise Fleet Management program and will be detailing the vehicle leases prior to July 1, 2025. Motion was seconded by Council Member Allie Winter and unanimously passed.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AS IT RELATES TO SELECTION OF FEMA MANAGEMENT SERVICES:**

Tim O'Briant stated he was recommending Royal Engineering for FEMA damage assessment and reimbursement. Council was reminded that the City has requested \$5,454,000 in

FEMA reimbursement from Hurricane Helene. Having engineering consultants that were experienced in disaster relief, successful with grant management, and a proven track record is critical for knowing what has been damaged and obtaining the reimbursements. Mr. O'Briant clarified that each task the engineers perform would come back to Council as a task order for approval of expenditures.

Fire Chief Chris Elrod stated an important part of having this firm is to know actual cost associated with damage, and at the present time these costs are projected.

Council discussed the contract and the 60-day termination clause.  
>>Motion was made by Council Member Allie Winter to agree to contract with Royal Engineering for FEMA reimbursement. Motion was seconded by Council Member Floyd Rogers and unanimously approved.

### **CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AS IT RELATES TO BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICES:**

Mr. O'Briant presented the proposal from BLE engineering to take over as the providers for Building Inspections as Pickens County has given notice they will no longer perform these duties. Mr. O'Briant stated this company has extensive knowledge of local government and the surrounding areas. The company will provide the City with 25% of revenues from the building permits. Also, their offices are in Greenville, Spartanburg, and Asheville. Therefore, Pickens Residents should have minimal wait times for inspections.

Council discussed enforcement of sub-contractors, business license and various other items important to building codes. Council also discussed the possibility of an in-house Codes Enforcement Officer.

>>Motion was made by Council Member Floyd Rogers to approve BLE for the Building Inspections within the City of Pickens. Motion was seconded by Council Member Ray Wilson and unanimously approved.

*Recess:*

*Council Member Floyd Rogers moved for a (10) minutes recess. Motion was seconded by Council Member Allie Winter and unanimously approved.*

*Council Member Floyd Rogers moved to reconvene following the recess, seconded by Council Member Allie Winter and unanimously approved.*

### **DISCUSSION OF ANNEXATION REQUEST, WOLF CREEK SCHOOL ROAD:**

Mayor Scipio stated he placed this on the agenda so Council could discuss the meeting held on April 23, 2025, for the Developer to officially announce design and plans for the proposed development. Mayor Scipio stated this issue has received much community interest and he has read every email and talked to those who are opposed to this project as well as those citizens and businesses that are supporters. Mayor Scipio stated this will be a time for Council to discuss this issue and make comments. Mayor Scipio stated that Pickens needs to grow but not lose the small-town identity. Also stated was that Pickens no longer has the industry and population as it did in the past.

Mayor Scipio stated this is a contentious issue and he would like Mr. Ben Mann and (6) others who are in opposition to form a committee. He would also suggest a committee of (7) citizens that are supporters. These committees will meet with Council to discuss the facts prior to a Council vote. Mayor Scipio stated he would like this meeting to be at the Senior Center. Administrator O'Briant stated a facilitator would be in order. Council concurred.

Council discussed this meeting should have a different sentiment than the meeting of 4/23/25. Council Members believe they have heard the emotions of citizens, and now it is time to

answer factual concerns such as waste sites, water rights, easements, and legal issues about binding development agreements. Council Member Rogers stated the need to have real numbers concerning revenues and infrastructure expenses. All Council concur this is a crucial decision.

Council Member Winter stated this is a contentious issue and facts need to be stated. The City stands to gain 33% of tax revenue if this is developed within the City limits. Thus, the City will have no benefits if developed within the County. Ms. Winter Stated she believes this parcel will be developed either way. Council Member Rivers stated he is also seeking facts, and he wants to know more about the developer.

In conclusion:

- A date will be set for a meeting at the senior center
- A committee of 7 will form for opposition (Ben Mann)
- A committee of 7 will form for supporters (Council Members McManus and Rogers)
- A facilitator will be active in establishing topics and setting ground rules
- Council Member Rivers and Rogers will meet with the Administrator and Bethlehem Roanoke Water
- Council Member McManus advised the EPA website has the facts regarding Pickens County and the Sangamo waste site
- All Council concurred it is time to collect information and make an informative decision.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Hearing no further business, Mayor Scipio called for the motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Council Member John McManus, seconded by Council Member Allie Winter, and unanimously approved to adjourn. Pickens City Council stood adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Donna F. Owen, City Clerk

Approved:



Mayor Isaiah Scipio