

**City of Pickens
Regular Meeting
May 19, 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 May 9, 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
Public Works Director, Trey Adams
Police Chief, Randal Beach
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. Council Member Floyd Rogers gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR SCIPIO:

Mayor Scipio thanked everyone for their attendance, and thanked staff for the work that has been put into the FY 2025/26 budget.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS:

Molly Treadway – Ms. Treadway, the owner of a local Rodio was upset that her banners and signs have been removed. She stated that she has permission under a grandfather clause to keep her signs up because she has weekly rodeos. Ms. Treadway specifically stated that Council Member Ray Wilson was removing her signs. Ms. Treadway was informed staff would try to resolve this issue, but to address the Mayor and Council as a whole.

Pam Winter - Ms. Winter gave Council statistics from the November 2024 Planning Commission that claimed the City of Pickens has grown with new homes, apartments, and new businesses.

Jonathan Baker – Mr. Baker stated he did not believe the agenda is following state law. Mr. Baker did not believe the Council should be going into executive session to discuss the Audit.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:

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

- **County Road Maintenance:** Mr. O’Briant informed Council that Pickens County has reduced funding for road paving. The City has 70 roads and the budget cuts for Federal, State, and County funding is critical.
- **Lighting Strike and Cybersecurity & Ransomware Protection:** Mr. O’Briant stated last Friday, City Hall had a lightning strike that completely took the City offline. Thankfully, a back-up solution worked and everything is running. Council acknowledged concerns over cybersecurity vulnerabilities, particularly the risk of a ransomware attack. Mr. O’Briant stated he was making efforts to establish a staggered physical hardware backup system, allowing recovery of data even if systems are compromised. There is also training opportunity for the insurance provider to implement cybersecurity training, including simulated phishing and AI-driven fraud attempts.

FINANCE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Finance Director, Mandy Hess went over her report that was provided in the agenda packet to the Mayor, Council, and the public.

- Ms. Hess answered questions regarding (2) police accounts.
- Council Member Allie Winter thanked staff for doing the training for the 5% discount on insurance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council Member Allie Winter moved to approve the minutes of April 14, April 23, and April 28, 2025. Council Member Ray Wilson seconded the motion.

During discussion Council Member John McManus mentioned the minutes of April 23, 2025, on page 3. The minutes reflect a citizen stated, “there is a superfund site 100 yards from the proposed annexation site.” Mr. McManus stated this should be footnoted as an opinion and it has not been checked that this is a true statement.

Both Ms. Winter and Mr. Wilson concurred, and the minutes were unanimously approved as amended to footnote the minutes of April 23, 2025. ***(Environmental & Contamination remark regarding a superfund site 100 yards from proposed annexation property was read by speaker Mr. Peter Greenberger, this is not in the minutes as factual information, this is in the minutes as a read statement from a citizen. And as of the date of this meeting, this information has not been fact checked)***

APRIL 14, 2025 – REGULAR MEETING

APRIL 23, 2025 – SPECIAL CALLED TOWN HALL MEETING (as amended)

APRIL 28, 2025- WORK SESSION

FIRST READING OF THE FISCAL YEAR BUDGET ORDINANCE NO. 2025-02 FY 2025/2026:

Council will be having the first budget work session on Wednesday 5/21/25 at 9:00 a.m.

- Mr. McManus made note of the millage rate and asked the Finance Director to make sure the budget reflects 86.3 mills calculation.
 - Ms. Winter would like to know when the last time the millage rate was raised.
- The Finance Director will provide information on Wednesday and address the 86.3 mills.

Council Member Allie Winter moved to approve a first reading for the FY 2025/26 Budget Ordinance No. 2025-02 in title only. Motion was seconded by Council Member Floyd Rogers. All members voted in favor with the exception of Council Member Cameron Rivers who opposed. Motion carried 5-1.

DISCUSSION AS IT RELATES TO THE CITY OF PICKENS ZONING ORDINANCE:

During Council discussion Mayor Scipio stated this was an ordinance that he thought Council should look at as a whole. Mr. O'Briant recommended that as the Planning Commission is reviewing and updating the Comprehensive Plan, that Council should have some joint meetings with the Planning Commission. Council concurred the ordinance needs to be looked at closely as more commercial real estate is for sale on Main Street. Compliance with the ordinance is also a concern. Council Member Allie Winter stated this was an ordinance that the Planning Commission should review and bring back to City Council.

MOTION TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion was made by Council Member Floyd Rogers to enter into executive session with City auditor to discuss 2022-23 financial audit and possible claims related thereto as allowed by S.C. Code 30-4-70(a)(2). Motion was seconded by Council Member John McManus and unanimously approved.

RECONVENE INTO PUBLIC SESSION:

Motion was made by Council Member John McManus, seconded by Council Member Floyd Rogers, and unanimously approved to reconvene into Public Session.

Mayor Scipio stated Council has been in discussion with Auditors Greene Finney as it relates to the 2022/2023 budget year Audit.

- It was noted that there is \$157,000 in unreconciled funds. Mayor Scipio stated the current Council was not seated during the 2022/2023 budget year. However, the City's accounting firm, Manley Garvin, has been collaborating with staff and going back over the fiscal year to determine these discrepancies. Manley Garvin will endeavor to assist over the next (2) weeks. Mayor Scipio also stated that current staff was not in place in 2022/2023.

ACTION ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Council Member Floyd Rogers made a motion to direct accountants Manley Garvin to continue to locate the unreconciled difference of \$157,000 as it relates to the 2022/2023 Audit and report back to City Council within (2) weeks before discussing a forensic audit possibility. Motion was seconded by Council Member Cameron Rivers and unanimously approved.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL:

Council Member Allie Winter asked about future dates for meetings as it relates to annexation. Council Member Floyd Rogers stated he feels like he has heard enough from citizens opposed and the developers. Council concurred they need to vote and move in the direction of facts. Council Member John McManus stated any future meetings need to include not only this particular planning development but also future developments. Council Member Allie Winter stated she believes it is time that Council moves forward. Council Member Rivers stated there are many variables that need to be known before another forum would be productive. Council Member Ray Wilson stated he does not believe the developer can move forward until City Council moves

forward. Council determined they need to have a first reading of the annexation ordinance in order to provide facts and move forward.

ADJOURNMENT:

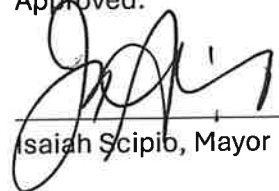
Hearing no further business, Mayor Scipio called for the motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Council Member John McManus, seconded by Council Member Allie Winter, and unanimously approved to adjourn. Pickens City Council stood adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Approved:



Donna F. Owen, City Clerk



Isaiah Scipio, Mayor