

City of Pickens
Work Session
March 23, 2026
6:00 P.M.

The Mayor and City Council convened at Pickens City Hall, 219 Pendleton Street, Pickens, S.C. for a Regular Meeting. Agendas were posted and sent to media on March 19, 2026.

Council Members in Attendance:

Mayor, Isaiah Scipio
Allie Winter, Mayor Pro-Tem
Council Member Danny Adams
Council Member Jonathan Baker
Council Member Cameron Rivers
Council Member Floyd Rogers
Council Member Ray Wilson

Staff:

Administrator, Tim O'Briant
Public Works Director, Trey Adams
Chief of Police, Randal Beach
Fire, Jeff Howard
Recreation Director, Jonathon Morris
Front office Manager, Kayla McJunkin
Code Enforcement, Matt Chappell
Planning and Zoning, Jennifer Vissage
City Attorney, Daniel Hughes

(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. Administrator Tim O'Briant led the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR SCIPIO:

Thanked all of Council and staff for everything that has been done to get to this point in the budget process.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Administrator Tim O'Briant reported on the following items to the Mayor, Council, and Public. (All Reports are available on the City website)

Additional Revenues Report:

- SCIIP SCRIA Amends grant to reduce City match
- Produces \$397,00 in new revenue
- Property tax collection up due to growth in tax rolls and reassessment

- Produces (thus far) \$70,000 in new revenue
- FEMA set to proceed on \$700,000 in additional grant funding for Helene expenses.
- Total additional funding \$467,000 assured, another \$500,000 anticipated.

Downtown Parking & EV Charging Project

- Tim O'Briant said that he thought the project would be done for \$100,000 but left out the \$97,000 electric infrastructure charge. Estimated total for project cost is \$149,080-\$156,080 funded through existing capital allocations. \$100,000 line items allocated to the parking lot and another \$100,000 allocated to the Teen Canteen needs which council did not proceed with, in those two lines alone there is \$180,000 available. Duke Energy has a \$25,000 grant available, and blink had discounted \$40,000 on the charger.
- \$800 has already been spent for a survey of the property, remaining cost of the project are Ev charger units \$31,000, Electrical infrastructure \$97,230, Paving \$20,000-\$27,000, and Striping and barriers minimal will be done in house.
- O'Briant stated that staff recommendation was to move forward with the project, and asked council to weigh in at this time. Council Member Baker stated that he did not think it was beneficial for our city to have the chargers and thinks it is a waste of money. He also stated that talking to the community that no one was excited to see it happening.
- Council Member Rivers said he would like to see the parking lot done, and that they budgeted for the parking lot not the chargers, Council Member Adams agreed.
- Council Member Winters wants the parking lot finished and safe and does not think the chargers are necessary at this time.

>>Council Member Baker made a motion to move forward with paving the parking lot without the EV chargers, Council Member Rivers seconded the motion. All in favor, Council Member Winter, Council Member Rivers, Council Member Adams, Council Member Baker. Voting for the EV chargers were Council Member Wilson, Council Member Rogers, and Mayor Scipio. Motion to do the parking lot without the charger passed 4-3.

Administrative Concern:

- Administrator O'Briant has concerns and wants direction from council as a whole that Council Member Baker is wanting to know when and why employees resign or terminated. Attorney Daniel Huges was there to help guide that it is not good practice for council to get involved in administrative matters. Daniel Hughes asked to pause this matter before Council gets involved and wants to seek a labor law attorney.

PRESENTATION FROM LOUISE HOPE, TURTLES ON THE TOWN:

- Mrs. Hope asked for support in reestablishing a starting location for Turtles on the Town due to Pickens First Baptist revolting. Her recommendation is the sidewalk in front of TD Bank. Jordan Freeman is ready to start the mural and has quoted \$500 to do so. Recreation Director Joanthon Morris has helped Louise with getting private funding to buy City coins to reward those that complete the tour.

>>Council Member Rogers made the motion to sponsor the \$500 for Turtles on the Town. Council Member Wilson second the motion. Council Member Baker asked to modify the motion as of concern of liability of textured painting which may increase the

cost. Council Member Winter second the amended amendment. All voted in favor as amended.

FINANCE REPORT

- No updates since the reports that were already received, opened questions.
- Council Member Baker asked why the auditors pushed back the audit and it is because they are short staffed with a lot of obligations going on until the end of April for 2023-2024, and then the 2024-2025 audit will be done to get us caught up.
- Councilwoman Allie asked since the spending freeze has been lifted if she felt good about what receipts are coming in and Finance Director stated that we could be more cautious.

INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 BUDGET AND SCHEDULING OF BUDGET WORK SESSIONS:

- Administrator O'Briant handed out to all of council a balanced budget for them to take and make changes as needed.
- Initial requests exceeded revenue, No COLA recommended, 5% expense reductions, and no tax increase proposed.
- Capital Investments: Water meter replacement, \$600,000, SCADA system implementation \$168,000, and REC center HVAC \$250,000.
- Transition to a full-time in-house planner and no longer a contract with ACOG.
- 3% COLA would cost around \$260,000, and recent salary adjustments have already been implanted from a salary study.
- Mayor Scipio wants to sit down with each department head individually; April 1st this will take place.

INTRODUCTION OF FUTURE ANNEXATION POLICIES THAT PRIORITIZE INFILL AND DONUT HOLE CLOSURE AND LIMITS FRINGE AREA GROWTH:

- Mayor Scipio wants an in-depth meeting and to include the public, this will be held on April 13, 2026 with a comprehensive plan for review.

DISCUSSION OF A SIX-MONTH MORATORIUM ON NEW VAPE AND TOBACCO RETAIL BUSINESS:

- Council Member Rivers asked for clarification from Administrator as to what exactly is going on. O'Briant explained that this action is not uncommon. We want to take time to study and do our zoning.
- Attorney Daniel Hughes wanted to make sure it was known this does not apply to any existing vape shops, only going forward.
- Mayor Scipio asked Chief Randal Beach to speak on what he has experienced. The merchandise sold at these stores is not what they say they are. Even after

being put on notice of selling illegal products, the stores are continuing to sell the items.

- First reading of the six-month moratorium will be held April 13th.
- >>Council Member Allie Winters made a motion to take a 5-minute recess. Council Member Rogers Seconded the motion, and motion passed unanimously.
- >>Council Member Rogers moved to reconvene from recess, seconded by Council Member Wilson, and unanimously passed. Council was back in session.

CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

>>Motion to enter the following executive sessions as stated was made by Council Member Rogers and seconded by council Member Adams. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

- a. Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss Development Agreement and to receive legal advice pertaining to the Wolf Creek Annexation as allowed by S.C. Code 30-4-70(a)(2).
- b. Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss contractual matters pertaining to city owned property located at 208 Johnson Street as allowed by S.C. Code 30-4-70(a)(2)
- c. Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss contractual matters with Appalachian Council of Governments as allowed by S.C. Code 30-4-70(a)(2)
- d. Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters as allowed by S.C. Code 30-4-70(a)(1).

RECONVENE INTO PUBLIC SESSION:

- Council Member Wilson made a motion to reconvene into public session with Council Member Council Member Floyd Rogers giving the second. Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION AS IT RELATES TO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- Council discussed City owned property on Johnson Street.
- Appalachian COG contract with discussed, with comprehensive plan to be brought on April 13, the city will move forward with a full-time planner.
- Wolf Creek project is currently on hold because BRD is in bankruptcy because no development agreement has been reached and a new one will have to be signed in the future.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS: NONE


ADJOURNMENT:

Hearing no further business Mayor Scipio called for the motion to adjourn. Council Member Allie Winter made the motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Council Member Ray Wilson and unanimously passed. Pickens City Council stood adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Kayla McJunkin, Acting City Clerk

Approved:



Mayor, Isaiah Scipio