

City of Pickens
Regular Meeting
April 13, 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 April 9, 2026.

Council Members in Attendance:

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

Staff:

Administrator, Tim O'Briant
Chief of Police, 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 Isaiah Scipio called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. Mayor Scipio gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

>>Agenda Amendment:

Council Member Jonathan Baker moved to amend the agenda to remove item (7) and discuss this at a later date, as other properties have been offered to the City. Motion was seconded by Council Member Allie Winter and unanimously passed. Ms. Winter clarified that these properties are not listings of Mr. Bakers in his professional capacity.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR SCIPIO:

Mayor Scipio announced the death of past fire chief, David Porter. Mayor Scipio asked for a moment of silence to remember Mr. Porters' family.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS:

Pam Winters.

Ms. Winters addressed the mayor and council to express serious concerns about how her name was handled in connection with an altered-email incident reported to the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED). She explained that:

- An anonymously delivered package containing altered emails was sent to City Hall on December 16.

- The city quickly concluded the emails had been altered and identified her as the person who supposedly received the original email through a Freedom of Information Act request.
- Her name was included in the official referral to SLED, even though the SLED investigation later proved this identification was incorrect.
- She emphasized that she never received, altered, or shared the email in question. Ms. Winters questioned how her name was placed in a law-enforcement referral without evidence, noting that city staff admitted during the investigation that they had no way of knowing who had received the original email.

Ms. Winters also referenced a separate incident in which Council member Baker was falsely accused of unauthorized entry into the municipal judge's office, suggesting the two events may be connected and possibly intended to silence individuals advocating for government accountability.

Ms. Winters stated that at least one person in city leadership likely knows more about how her name ended up in the referral, who altered the email, and why false accusations were made. She stressed that someone intentionally created or modified a document to make it appear that crimes were being committed, which she considers a serious act. She concluded by asking the Council to find the truth.

Tabitha Skipper-

Ms. Skipper with the Pickens Azalea Festival updated Council regarding this year's festival to be held on April 24-25. Ms. Skipper requested funding from the City of Pickens to offset expenses. Ms. Skipper stated they are expected to have a large crowd, and she believes this festival grows significantly each year. Council also held some discussions on the expense of restrooms and discussed business licensing for the vendors.

>>Motion was made by Council Member Allie Winter, seconded by Council Member Danny Adams to fund \$8,000 to the festival from the line item as recommended by the Finance Director.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

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

- Mr. O'Briant gave the update regarding the completion of the new parking lot next to Dominos
- Mr. O'Briant requested to apologize to Pam Winters and Nikki Bolan. He stated when SLED questioned him after an anonymous allegation, he mentioned their names only because they are frequent FOIA requesters—not to imply there was any wrongdoing and never suggested they were involved in any misconduct. Mr. O'Briant stated regret if his comments caused stress. The intention was solely to answer investigators' questions, and I appreciate the chance to clarify that publicly.
- Ms. Winters asked to make the following statement---Mr. Winters stated that she was named in a SLED referral, and she has a copy of the SLED report showing this. She points out that SLED spoke with the Mayor on the 19th, while the emails in question were received on the 16th, suggesting the timeline contradicts the allegation.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

>>>Motion was made by Council Member Allie Winter, seconded by Council Member Floyd Rogers. Mr. Baker stated he was not voting as he has not compared some of the minutes to the recording or

video. All members of Council approved of the minutes as presented with the exception of Mr. Baker. Motion carried 5-1.

- March 9, 2026, Regular Meeting
- March 23, 2026, Work Session
- March 31, 2026, Special Called
- April 1, 2026, Budget Work Session
- April 7, 2026, Special Called

REQUEST BY COUNCIL MEMBER BAKER TO DISCUSS POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO PURCHASE PROPERTY IN THE CITY LIMITS: (Removed from this agenda)

INTRODUCTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Jennifer Vissage with the Appalachian Council of Governments thanked the Pickens Planning Commission for working with this document for the last year. Ms. Vissage made new maps to show the large parcel of annexed property. Ms. Vissage went over the various meetings that was held in order to develop the comprehensive plan. The plan has goals, natural resources, community events, demographics, community needs, transportation and land use.

During Council discussions, Ms. Vissage went over surveys regarding things citizens desired such as grocery stores, bookstores, walking and bike paths, and meat/three restaurants. Ms. Vissage discussed this plan does put the City in compliance in order to apply for ARC grants. Council Member Allie Winter also discussed the need for hotels and a bed & breakfast. Mr. Rogers stated he would like to see the overall aesthetics of the City be more appealing. Mr. Baker brought up job concerns and discussed population growth.

Ms. Vissage stated this should go back to the Planning Commission for a Public Hearing and then back to City Council. Ms. Vissage encouraged Council to email her if any further goals/information needs to be added.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS: NONE

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 Ray Wilson and unanimously passed. Pickens City Council stood adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:


Donna Owen, City Clerk

Approved:

Mayor, Isaiah Scipio