City of Pickens
Council Work Session
October 26, 2026
6:00 p.m.

The Mayor and City Council convened at Pickens City Hall, 219 Pendleton Street, Pickens, S.C. for a regular Work-Session. Agendas were posted and sent to media on October 23, 2026.

Council Members in Attendance:
Mayor Pro-Tem, Allie Winter
Council Member Danny Adams
Council Member Jonathan Baker
Council Member Cameron Rivers
Council Member Ray Wilson

Council Members absent:
Mayor, Isaiah Scipio
Council Member Floyd Rogers

Staff:
Meagan Nations, City Clerk/Human Resources Director
Chris Elrod, Fire Chief
Randal Beach, Chief of Police
Trey Adams, Public Works Director
Jonathon Morris, Recreation Director
Matt Chappell, Developmental Services Manager
Chuck Kellenberger, Codes Enforcement

(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 Pro-Tem Allie Winter called the council meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. Chief Beach further gave the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmember Allie made a motion to amend the agenda to add an Executive Session item regarding Personnel-Administration Department. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Jonathan Baker and carried unanimously (5-0).

MONTHLY REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Trey Adams: Public Works

- Mr. Adams asked if Council had any questions regarding his report.
- Councilmember Baker asked about the City's downtown street-cleaning schedule and whether the city had considered using a street sweeper to improve efficiency. Mr.

Adams explained that downtown streets are cleaned every Thursday using a walk-behind leaf vacuum, along with the City's leaf truck. The leaf truck is currently being repaired due to dashboard warning lights and engine-related issues but is expected to be back in service before leaf season.

- Discussion followed regarding whether contracting a street sweeper or removing certain landscaping features, such as flower beds and grates, would make street cleaning more efficient. Mr. Adams noted that much of the debris comes from the downtown trees and that a street sweeper would still require crews to move debris away from flower beds and grates before it could be collected. He also explained that the existing bump-outs and flower beds were installed under a state encroachment permit in approximately 2014 and could be removed if desired. He indicated that additional cleaning could be scheduled as needed if conditions warranted.

Chief Randal Beach: Police Department

- Chief Beach acknowledged the recent loss of a Police Department member and thanked the community and City Council for their support. He also recognized Lieutenant Tye Nalley for 15 years of service to the Pickens Police Department and commended department members for their dedication.
- Chief provided updates on upcoming community events, including Hawk Motorsports, Trick-or-Treat on Main Street, and activities on East Cedar Rock Road. He noted record attendance at local sporting events and emphasized the need for improved coordination and planning among departments for large community events. He also mentioned the upcoming Gabby Petito Foundation event and recognized local musician Lily Ferlinga for her accomplishments.
- Councilmember Baker had a question regarding the Police Department Salary Budget. Chief Beach explained that a Class I officer position originally associated with Administration had been placed under the Police Department's budget, contributing to the discrepancy. He also addressed CentralSquare software costs, explaining that expenses are expected to exceed the $20,000 budget due to increasing costs associated with the countywide records management system. Chief stated that he is working with the vendor regarding payment arrangements and emphasized the need to monitor expenses moving forward.
- Council requested updated employee and volunteer rosters from all departments, including names and positions, to help Council become more familiar with City personnel. The Chief agreed to provide a Police Department roster, including reserve officers.

Chief Chris Elrod: Fire Department

- Chief Elrod noted that payroll expenses across all departments may appear lower than actual expenditures, as only two payroll cycles have been posted to the ledger, with six additional cycles still pending. Additional payroll entries are being processed, and budget figures should become more accurate once all cycles are posted.
- Chief reported that the Fire Department completed its October fire prevention and safety visits at local elementary schools. The department also assisted with lighting and

parking at the Pickens versus Daniel football game in coordination with Pickens County Emergency Management to improve safety and assist the Police Department.

- Chief Elrod reported that a hydraulic cylinder on the ladder truck's outrigger had been rebuilt. The department is awaiting the invoice for the repair, noting that the truck's age makes these maintenance needs expected.
- Council and staff discussed the Hazard Mitigation Grant awarded for a standby generator at the Recreation Facility. The grant will cover 75% of the project, approximately $66,000, leaving an estimated $22,000 for the City. Staff is preparing an RFP to obtain proposals, with the project required to be completed within 48 months.
- Chief Elrod provided updates on outstanding reimbursements, including approximately $65,000 in ice storm emergency protective measures funding, related administrative costs, remaining Hurricane Helene reimbursements, and the final insurance payment for the Public Works shed. The restroom trailer is expected to arrive in early November, and the Chief will follow up on its delivery status.

Bryan Owens: Marketing

- Mr. Owens provided updates on upcoming community events, including a public drop-in session for the Downtown Plan on Wednesday from 4:00–7:00 p.m. at the Chamber of Commerce. Attendees will have the opportunity to review drawings, ask questions, and provide input. He noted that approximately 80 responses were received from the initial survey and that additional efforts are being made to encourage participation from younger residents.
- Upcoming events also include the first movie night of the season at Doodle Park on Thursday, featuring Hocus Pocus at 7:00 p.m., with popcorn sales benefiting the Recreation Department. Trick-or-Treat on Main Street will take place Saturday from 4:00–7:00 p.m., followed by the Pickin' in Pickens Bluegrass Jam on Friday, November 6, beginning at 6:00 p.m., with several downtown businesses participating.
- Mr. Owens reported that a community survey has been distributed to gather input on desired events for 2027. Approximately 106 responses have been received, with additional responses continuing to come in. Staff plans to review the feedback and bring proposed 2027 events and funding needs before Council in the coming weeks.
- During discussion, Councilmember Baker asked whether Facebook was the City's only social media platform for promoting events and gathering community feedback. The concern was that younger residents may not use Facebook as frequently, limiting their participation. Mr. Owens acknowledged the suggestion and expressed appreciation for considering additional platforms to reach younger audiences.

Jonathon Morris: Recreation Director

- Mr. Morris provided an update on the Recreation and Grounds Department. The Department maintains approximately 153 acres, including 57 acres of mowing areas, and staff continue to manage significant mowing, grounds maintenance, facility upkeep, and event support responsibilities. Staff were recognized for improvements to the JC Park ball fields, which are now predominantly Bermuda grass.
- The Director reported that repairs are being evaluated for several areas of the Doodle Trail, with cost estimates provided for three areas on the Pickens side. The HVAC project

at the Recreation Center has received bids, with a recommendation identified based on the proposals, company history, system knowledge, and warranty.

- The Department currently has more than 600 athletes participating in football, cheerleading, volleyball, and soccer. Mr. Morris discussed the possibility of replacing spring soccer with spring flag football due to limited competition for spring soccer. Fall soccer would continue, while flag football would provide opportunities for competition with other recreation departments and participation in tournaments.
- Council also discussed recreation registration fees and comparisons with other departments in the county. The Director noted that the city currently has lower registration fees but also has fewer staff and facilities. He recommended not increasing registration fees at this time unless the city is able to increase the level of service, potentially through additional staffing.
- The Director reported that the Department is exploring opportunities to generate additional revenue through field rentals and tournaments as interest from travel teams increases. He also discussed the workload associated with grounds maintenance and event support, noting that additional staffing would make the responsibilities more manageable.
- For FY 2025–26, the Recreation Department recorded more than 1,800 registrations, a new departmental record and an increase of approximately 600 registrations since 2023. The Director expressed appreciation to Council and staff for their continued support.

Administration

- The Mayor Pro-Tem read the administration report

Jonathon Morris: Recreation Report

- Mr. Morris reported that department statistics were on track or ahead of the previous year in both operating revenue and program registrations. Basketball registration was approximately 345 participants, about 10 more than the previous year. He recognized Seth Merck and Gordon Patterson, employees in the department, for assisting an elderly citizen who was having difficulty crossing a busy intersection on Hampton Avenue. Their assistance helped reunite the individual with a family member and ensure he returned home safely.
- Mr. Morris reported that 11 All-Star teams would be competing in state tournaments for soccer, volleyball, and football. The City's football program also had the largest number of participants in the district during the fall season.
- He provided an update on the Doodle Trail StoryWalk project. Permanent structures have been installed in partnership with the Library, Rotary Club, and Pickens County Health Society. One structure was found missing following installation, and staff planned to replace it by the end of the week.
- Council and staff discussed the proposed HVAC replacement at the Recreation Facility. Mr. Morris confirmed that bids had been received and a recommendation had previously been provided. Equipment delivery could take approximately six weeks, depending on availability. Staff explained that the project could be awarded now, with

installation and payment postponed until spring. Council discussed the current need, project costs, and the possibility of arranging a payment plan with the contractor. Staff agreed to contact the recommended company to determine whether payment arrangements without interest would be available and bring the matter back before Council.

- Mr. Morris provided an update on recent cleanup and improvements at Sunrise Cemetery, noting assistance from volunteers and Public Works employees and equipment. Staff plans to continue improvements leading up to Veterans Day and beyond. The Director emphasized the need to establish a formal perpetual care plan and discussed ongoing concerns with unmarked or damaged graves, sinking plots, overgrown trees, and long-term maintenance. A separate budget line item for cemetery maintenance may be considered in the upcoming budget. The cemetery flagpole and base were delivered to the Public Works facility, and staff is coordinating installation.
- A Council member asked about Recreation Department event expenses and the department's current budget status. The Director explained that some expenses, including portable restroom rentals, had been charged to incorrect line items and would be reclassified. Department Heads are expected to review budget accounts and make necessary adjustments.
- Mr. Morris also reported that the Garden Club recently replaced flowers in the downtown decorative planters. The city plans to water the planters on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and use plant food to help maintain them.
- Council and staff discussed the possibility of simplifying landscaping in downtown islands by removing certain plants and replacing them with gravel or other low-maintenance materials. Staff noted that a more comprehensive landscaping plan would help create consistency, reduce maintenance, and improve employee safety while working along busy streets.
- Lastly, the Police Chief highlighted three annual events held at Sunrise Cemetery: Veterans Day, Wreaths Across America, and Memorial Day. He noted the involvement of the Pickens High School band and ensemble, as well as Police Officer Sean Smith, who will serve as a speaker for the Veterans Day event.

Meagan Nations: Human Resources

- Mrs. Nations reported that Open Enrollment would close October 31, with employees receiving reminders and information regarding benefit changes. She also provided an update on preliminary discussions with Smart Fusion regarding HR software to centralize employee information and rosters. Ongoing responsibilities included workers' compensation claims, insurance updates, and maintaining City asset records.
- She thanked Hansel Ice Cream for providing a free ice cream social for City employees on October 16 and shared that pink ribbons were available at City Hall in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Employees were also encouraged to wear pink in support of the cause.

Matt Chappell: Development Services/Planning/Zoning

- Mr. Chappell reported on recent activities involving the City's boards and commissions, including onboarding and continuing education for new members of the Board of Architectural Review and Planning Commission. A training session was held locally, allowing five members to complete their continuing education requirements. He is also developing simplified handbooks outlining design guidelines, city ordinances, and land development regulations to assist board members, developers, and staff with application and plan reviews.
- Mr. Chappell reported 24 new code cases and 36 closed cases. Permits issued during the month represented approximately $660,000 in project value and generated approximately $3,100 in permit fees. Commercial plan review fees generated an additional $1,500. The department had approximately 42% of its budget remaining, with several larger annual expenses already paid early in the fiscal year.
- He discussed the need to proceed with the demolition of a condemned building on Main Street, located beside Main Street Pizza. The estimated cost is approximately $8,000, including asbestos abatement. Two bids were received, ranging from approximately $4,000 to $12,000, and funding is available in the current budget. Council discussed the request. Mr. Chappell also confirmed that the property on Ann Street had been taken down, with the site expected to be cleared and seeded.
- Council discussed vegetation and overgrowth along several roadways and properties, with staff noting areas that would be reviewed for trimming.
- Mr. Chuck Kellenburger, Codes Enforcement, addressed concerns regarding graffiti, explaining that it is considered criminal mischief and can be investigated, although identifying those responsible can be difficult. Council emphasized the importance of promptly removing graffiti to maintain the City's appearance. Discussion also included activity and vandalism at the Doodle Park train, including damaged windows and graffiti. Staff is considering additional security measures, such as securing doors after hours and installing reinforced glass.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION FROM MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA FIELD SERVICES MANAGER, ROB WOLFE, REGARDING COUNCIL GOVERNANCE AND PROCEDURES, AND MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION.

1:05

Mr. Rob Wolf, Field Services Manager with the Municipal Association of South Carolina, presented on Council governance and procedures. Discussion included:

- The City's council form of government and the roles of Council and administration.
- The importance of teamwork, civility, and respectful communication.
- Council's shared responsibilities and the limits of individual Council member authority.
- The importance of clear delegation of administrative duties and working together to serve citizens.
- Council holds legislative and administrative authority, including establishing departments, appointing key positions, hiring employees, adopting the annual budget, and calling special meetings.

- Special Meetings: Four Council members may call a special meeting. Discussion clarified that members may communicate to arrange a meeting but must avoid discussing or taking action on business outside a properly noticed meeting.
- Mayor's Authority: The mayor may call special meetings under state law and may perform administrative duties when authorized by Council.
- Committees: Special committees established by Council serve in an advisory capacity and make recommendations to the full Council rather than independent decisions.
- Clerk and City Attorney: Mr. Wolf reviewed the Clerk's responsibilities under state law and the City's provisions allowing the Mayor or Council to request legal opinions from the City Attorney.
- City Administrator: The City's ordinance outlines the Administrator's responsibilities, including daily operations, department head appointments, budget preparation and administration, purchasing policies, and reporting to Council.
- Communication with Employees: Mr. Wolf emphasized that Council members should communicate with the City Administrator regarding department matters and should not give direct orders to subordinate employees except in an emergency, as outlined in the City's ordinance. Council discussed clarification of what constitutes an emergency.
- Emergency Situations: Clarified that Council members may communicate directly with employees in emergency situations, such as addressing a roadway obstruction or immediate safety concern.
- Rules of Procedure: Recommended that Council consider adopting formal rules of procedure. MASC offers a simplified 12-page guide covering motions, amendments, agendas, and meeting procedures.
- Agenda Development: Reviewed Resolution 2026-R5, which authorizes the presiding officer to set the agenda while allowing Council members to request additions or modifications.
- Council Procedures Manual: Recommended developing a handbook outlining Council procedures, budget processes, meeting expectations, and other important information for elected officials.
- Executive Sessions: Reviewed permissible reasons for executive session, agenda notice requirements, and the importance of limiting discussions to legally permitted matters. Discussion included how much detail to include when listing personnel matters on an agenda.
- Confidentiality: Emphasized the importance of maintaining confidentiality regarding executive session discussions and legal advice. Any decision to release privileged legal information must be made by Council as a body in open session.
- Communication: Highlighted the importance of establishing consistent procedures for Council members to request and receive information from staff.
- Mr. Wolf emphasized the importance of ensuring all Council members receive the same information when an individual member submits a request to staff. He recommended establishing a consistent process for sharing information to promote transparency and avoid unequal access to information.
- He encouraged Council to prioritize clear, consistent communication, particularly during the process of hiring a new City Administrator.

- He discussed the importance of communication, civility, teamwork, and consensus-building in effectively addressing the City's needs and serving the community.
- Mr. Wolf reviewed MASC's Top 10 Tips for Effective Council Governance, which included:

    - Sharing information with all Council members and avoiding surprises during meetings.
    - Maintaining communication with department heads and staff.
    - Avoiding debates on social media.
    - Understanding the City's finances and budget.
    - Building trust and positive working relationships among Council members.
    - Receiving and reviewing agenda packets before meetings.
    - Working together as a team and building consensus.
    - Recognizing and celebrating the City's accomplishments.

Mr. Wolf offered to provide Council with MASC's model Rules of Procedure and an example Council Manual of Procedures for review.

Council thanked Mr. Wolf for his presentation.

Mayor Pro-Tem Winter announced that Representative Davey Hiott would be assisting the City on a temporary basis beginning Monday, November 2, 2026, while Council works to hire a new City Administrator. She expressed appreciation for Representative Hiott's willingness to provide guidance and leadership, noting his more than 20 years of experience serving the area at the state level. Representative Hiott would serve as a resource for department heads and assist Council with questions, guidance, and advice during the transition. Mrs. Winter thanked him for his willingness to help the city.

FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE 2026-09 TO AMEND CHAPTER 4, “ANIMALS,” OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF PICKENS, SOUTH CAROLINA, TO ESTABLISH A TEMPORARY LIVESTOCK KEEPING PERMIT.

Mayor Pro-Tem Winter presented the first reading of Ordinance 2026-09, amending Chapter 4 (Animals) of the Code of the City of Pickens to establish a temporary livestock keeping permit. Councilmember Ray Wilson made a motion to constitute first reading on this Ordinance, and Councilmember Danny Adams seconded the motion. Discussion included:

- Mayor Pro-Tem Winter questioned the definition of "temporary" and whether multiple permits could be issued to the same applicant within a calendar year. It was noted that the proposed ordinance did not establish a specific time limit or limit the number of permits.
- Mr. Chappell explained that the ordinance had been narrowed to address two specific uses:
    - The use of goats for vegetation management.
    - Temporary livestock use for educational purposes, exhibitions, and agricultural shows.

- Council discussion included:
    - Establishing a specific time limit for permits to prevent temporary livestock use from becoming permanent. Suggestions included a 30-day limit, with the possibility of an extension, or a maximum number of days within a six-month period.
    - Whether permit limits should apply to the applicant or the specific property location. The discussion favored applying the limit to each location so that an applicant could obtain permits for separate projects at different sites.
    - Zoning Districts
    - Council members expressed differing opinions on whether temporary livestock permits should be limited to business districts or also allowed in residential areas. Concerns included neighborhood impacts, fairness to residents and businesses, property size, and the potential benefits of using goats for vegetation management rather than pesticides.
    - Council discussed whether additional zoning ordinance amendments would be necessary to allow temporary livestock use in residential areas. It was noted that any zoning changes would require review by the Planning Commission before returning to Council.
    - Council discussed adding a notice requirement for the suspension or revocation of a permit. The City Attorney confirmed that language could be added requiring notice when a permit is suspended or revoked.
    - Attorney Hughes mentioned a clerical correction was also identified on page five of the proposed ordinance, where two subsections were labeled Section 3(E).
    - Council agreed that the proposed changes and clarifications should be reviewed by Mr. Chappell and the City Attorney and brought back for consideration at second reading, if approved.

>>>Mayor Pro-Tem Winter called for the vote hearing no other discussion. The motion failed (2-3), with Councilmember Adams, Councilmember Baker and Councilmember Rivers opposed.

CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION:
Motion to enter Executive Session for the following items:

1. Contractual-Section 30-4-70(A)(2):
    a. Discussion of Proposed Sale on Moorefield Memorial Highway (4181-20-81-5542)

2. Personnel-Section 30-4-70(A)(1):
    a. Administration Department

>>>Councilmember Danny Adams made a motion to convene into Executive Session for the stated purposes. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Cameron Rivers and carried unanimously (7-0).

RECONVENE INTO PUBLIC SESSION:
>>>Motion was made by Councilmember Ray Wilson and seconded by Councilmember Danny Adams to reconvene into public session.

ACTION AS IT RELATES TO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

1. Personnel Matter-Section 30-4-70(A)(1):
    a. Administration Department – **No Action Taken.**

2. Contractual-Section 30-4-70(A)(2):
    a. Discussion of Proposed Sale on Moorefield Memorial Highway (4181-20-81-5542) – **Councilmember Danny Adams made a motion to authorize the City Attorney to negotiate offer on property on Moorefield Memorial Highway (4181-20-81-5542). Motion was seconded by Councilmember Ray Wilson and carried unanimously (5-0).**

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Councilmember Jonathan Baker – Councilmember Baker raised concerns regarding the limited opportunity for public comment, which is currently only offered at the first meeting of each month. He asked to consider providing a public comment period at all meetings, including business meetings and work sessions. The City Attorney stated whether you do public input is up to council, as there is no law that states you must do public comment. He stated when Mr. Wolf sends the clerk the model rules of procedure, that may help answer some of the questions or concerns related to public comment.

Councilmember Ray Wilson- Councilmember Wilson thanked Anne Hall and the Pickens Garden Club for planning the planters downtown Pickens.

ADJOURNMENT:
Hearing no further business, Mayor Scipio called for the motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilmember Ray Wilson, seconded by Councilmember Danny Adams and unanimously passed. Pickens City Council stood adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

_____
Meagan Nations
City Clerk/Human Resources Director

Approved:

_____
Mayor, Isaiah Scipio