

## **Special Called County Council Meeting**

January 28, 2019

6:03 PM

County Council met in special session, in the Main Conference Room, County Administration Facility, with Chairman Roy Costner presiding. Agendas, bearing date, time, and location of meeting were mailed to members of council and local news media on January 25, 2019.

### Council Members in Attendance:

Roy Costner, Chairman

Chris Bowers, Vice Chairman

Wes Hendricks, Vice Chairman Pro-Tem

Trey Whitehurst

Ensley Feemster

Carl Hudson

### Staff in Attendance:

Gerald Wilson, County Administrator

Ken Roper, County Attorney

Meagan Bradford, Clerk to Council

### **WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Roy Costner called the meeting of January 28, 2019 to order and welcomed those in attendance. Chairman Costner led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

### **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH BY PARAMEDIC EDUCATION (“COPE”) PROGRAM WITHIN PICKENS COUNTY AS A FULLY FUNDED GRANT PROGRAM OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE SERVICES (DAODAS) TO ADDRESS OPIOID ADDICTION WITHIN THE COUNTY, AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO.**

- Chairman Roy Costner stated he would like to read a memorandum from Vice Chairman Chris Bowers before discussion. The letter read:

*Please be advised that I will be recusing myself from the vote on the Cope Program Resolution tonight. Bowers Emergency Services, my family's business, is involved in the COPE program and will be the recipient of funds for its participation in this state program. Although no county funds are impacted by this program, I want to avoid even the appearance of any impropriety. As such, I will not participate in the deliberations, discussion, or votes in this Resolution. I ask that you included this recusal statement in the minutes as required by state law.*

- Chairman Roy Costner asked for a motion to discuss a resolution endorsing the Community Outreach by Paramedic Education (“COPE”) Program within Pickens County as a fully funded grant program of the state of South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) to address opioid addiction within the county, and matters related thereto.
  - Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, and seconded by Councilman Carl Hudson.

- Chairman Roy Costner read the resolution listed below:

A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH BY PARAMEDIC EDUCATION (“COPE”) PROGRAM WITHIN PICKENS COUNTY AS A FULLY FUNDED GRANT PROGRAM OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE SERVICES (DAODAS) TO ADDRESS OPIOID ADDICTION WITHIN THE COUNTY, AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

WHEREAS, the prevalence of opioid abuse and addiction have had, and threaten to continue to have, an adverse impact on the well-being of many of the residents in Pickens County; and

WHEREAS, the State of South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) has established a program for Community Outreach by Paramedic Education, or “COPE” program; and

WHEREAS, the COPE Program would address opioid abuse and/or addiction by offering paramedic educational visits along with appropriate referrals for treatment for those impacted by opioids; and

WHEREAS, The COPE Program is funded by a DAODAS grant and is administered by a cooperative effort between private sector paramedics and local drug abuse counselors; and

WHEREAS, The Cope Program does not require any funding from Pickens County, but would more effectively operate if county personnel would make appropriate referrals to the Program;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that Pickens County Council, in recognition of the crisis of opioid abuse and addiction in our communities, does hereby endorse the COPE Program, agree to cooperate wherever possible, and to make appropriate referrals to the Program so as to maximize the positive impact of the Program on our community.

- Chairman Roy Costner recognized Angela Farmer, Mike Marling, and Randy Bowers and asked them to please step forward to explain more about the COPE Program.
  - Randy Bowers, Owner of Bower’s Emergency Services, stated around a year ago, DHEC approached Bower’s Emergency Services about providing funding through DAODAS to do a community outreach because Bower’s Emergency Services is one of the few licensed community paramedic programs in the state. He stated when they were looking at referral services, a doctor from DHEC suggested the best way to get referrals would be from the 911 system and local ER’s. Mr. Bowers stated it has been collaboration between Ken Roper, Mike Marling, Bower’s Emergency Services, DHEC and he stated this is a good program. He stated if someone is giving Narcan or treated for an overdose that is opioid connected, and within 72 hours if they are received Narcan or going to the ER, then a community paramedic and a peer counselor from Behavioral Health Services will go out to help. Mr. Bowers stated he is happy to answer any questions.
  - Angela Farmer, Director of Clinical Services at Behavior Health Services in Pickens, stated their part in the program is to offer a peer support specialist. She stated a peer support specialist is someone who is in long term recovery themselves and they will provide an opportunity as a mentor and to help provide the best treatment services for the individual. Ms. Farmer stated they will go out with the paramedic to the home visit, and engage with the client as a peer to encourage them to seek services. She stated if they are not able to engage with the individual, then they will continue to follow up.
  - Mike Marling, EMS Director, stated their major role will be to refer the patients they pick up. He stated they are already working with Mr. Bowers to seamlessly refer these patients to the Cope Program through Bowers EMS. He stated there is no additional cost and will not cost the county anything. Mr. Marling stated hopefully this will stem the opioid overdose and patients will not be reoccurring with drug overdoses.
- Chairman Costner stated this past week at the Appalachian Council of Government meeting; he overheard people talking about the opioid addiction and that there are more prescriptions written then there are people who live in this county. He stated this crisis is real and what he loves about this program is it addresses what the Phoenix Center was talking about. He stated it solves the

problem for a moment but not for a long time. He stated he would like to commend everyone involved for getting this type of funding.

- Councilman Wes Hendricks asked how long the grant is good for.
  - Randy Bowers stated this grant is good for this fiscal year and they have already started the process to apply for next year. He stated they would like to see some demonstration from this year. Mr. Bowers stated they are the first program in the state of South Carolina.
- Councilman Wes Hendricks asked if this program has been done in other states.
  - Angela Farmer stated the initial program started in a town called Wells Township, Ohio. She stated they have been able to see huge successes. She stated Ohio is one of the highest opioid issued states in the US. Ms. Farmer stated this has been a very successful project for Ohio.
- Councilman Wes Hendricks asked if any other paramedics in the county will be participating.
  - Randy Bowers stated at this time, Bower's Emergency Services will be the only agency involved.
- Chairman Costner asked for all those in favor of passing the resolution to please signify by raising their hand. Motion carried (5-0), with Vice Chairman Chris Bowers recused.

**ADJOURN:**

Hearing no further Council business, Chairman Roy Costner called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Councilman Carl Hudson, seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster and carried unanimously (6-0). Pickens County Council stood adjourned at 6:15pm and moved into the Committee of the Whole meeting.

Respectively Submitted:

Approved:

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Meagan Bradford, Clerk to Council

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Roy B. Costner, III, Chairman of County Council