

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL AS A WHOLE REPORT

Council Members:

Roy Costner, Chairman
Chris Bowers, Vice Chairman
Wes Hendricks, Vice Chairman Pro-Tem
Carl Hudson
Ensley Feemster
Trey Whitehurst

Staff in Attendance:

Gerald Wilson, County Administrator
Meagan Bradford, Clerk to Council
Ken Roper, County Attorney
Michael Hayes, Risk Manager

The Committee of the Whole met in the Main Conference Room, at the Pickens County Administration Facility, on Monday, February 25, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. All members of the committee were in attendance with Chairman Roy Costner presiding.

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Roy Costner called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order. Councilman Trey Whitehurst led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE:

Chairman Roy Costner stated the first item for discussion is Request from District 3 Councilmember for Council to consider the Vineyards Fire District Proposal to purchase a new fire truck from fund balance – Log No. 116.

Request from District 3 Councilmember for Council to consider the Vineyards Fire District Proposal to purchase a new fire truck from fund balance – Log No. 116

- Administrator Gerald Wilson stated some members from the Vineyards came to Council about the possibility of purchasing a new fire truck a couple of months ago. He stated Council asked them to get a petition started from the property owners and report back. Mr. Wilson went over the Vineyards Budget, with projected revenues and expenditures for the remainder of the fiscal year along with the first 5 months of the FY 2020 budget. Mr. Wilson stated if the County decides to go with the plan that the Emergency Services Advisory Board has on the table, this request does align with the plan.
- Councilman Wes Hendricks stated he believes we should let the Vineyards Fire District purchase a new fire truck, especially since they have over 50% of signatures from the Vineyards Property Owners. He stated if we do not move forward with this, then Council did not stay true to their word.
- Councilman Ensley Feemster asked how much the Vineyards will be paying up front, and how much on the bond.
- Rocky Odman stated it will be a four year bond, and he stated it will reduce the millage rate that the residents are currently paying with the existing bond that expires in a couple of months.
- Administrator Gerald Wilson stated that Ralph Guarino, Finance Director, recommends keeping 15% of the cash flow at the lowest point in the bank. He stated our financial policy recommends keeping 10-15% of operational expenses on hand for reserves.
- Councilman Wes Hendricks stated the Vineyards will also be giving a fire truck to Holly Springs, and Holly Springs will be giving a fire truck to Rocky Bottom.
- Vice Chairman Chris Bowers asked what the cost of the truck is.
- Administrator Gerald Wilson stated \$425,000. He stated this is the truck and the equipment.

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL AS A WHOLE REPORT

- Vice Chairman Chris Bowers asked if the millage rate stays the same, could we pay off the bond any quicker.
- Rocky Odman stated yes, depending on how much they can take out of their reserve they can pay it off quicker.
- After more discussion, Councilman Wes Hendricks made a motion to approve the purchase of the Vineyards Fire Truck through a bond, keeping the millage rate the same or less. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster and carried unanimously (6-0).
- Vice Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to remove item number 116 from the log, and advised staff to prepare documents for a 1st reading at the next council meeting. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster and carried unanimously (6-0).
- ❖ Committee recommends removing item No. 116 from the log.

Road Maintenance Fees – Log No. 66

- Administrator Gerald Wilson stated Attorney Ken Roper drafted an Intergovernmental Agreement for the municipalities based on the comments and feedback Council gave staff at the last Committee of the Whole meeting. He stated on an annual basis, the county evaluates all roads inside the municipalities and the county.
- Attorney Ken Roper stated this simplifies the system to say the county is responsible for the roads in the county, and the cities are responsible for the roads in their city. He stated they get the unit mile value fee to take care of the roads. He stated there is an annual meeting they try to coordinate the paving along with the municipalities. He stated this is more of a cooperative approach that will make everything simpler within the county and municipalities.
- After more discussion, Administrator Wilson stated the municipalities have taken the feedback back to their councils and all like the idea of where we are right now. Mr. Wilson stated at the annual meeting, they will talk about paving contracts, road mileage, and an overview.
- Councilman Wes Hendricks asked what if the city does not maintain the county road within the city and what the repercussions are.
- Mr. Wilson stated this is what the IGA is for. He stated the Ordinance was developed and written in order to maintain county and municipality roads.
- Chairman Roy Costner asked if this repeals the Ordinance.
- Mr. Wilson stated no, this is an intergovernmental agreement between Pickens County Council and the Municipalities. This agreement keeps the ordinance in place and is an agreement on how we operate. He stated moving forward, all Pickens County roads will have the county seal to identify it being a county road.
- Councilman Whitehurst asked if anyone knew how many state roads are inside the cities.
- Mr. Wilson stated he does not know, but the cities do. He stated they have the city and county information, but not the state. He stated this agreement is compliant to the Ordinance drafted in 2001.
- After much more discussion, Vice Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to bring this Intergovernmental Agreement before Council to vote, and to remove item number 66 from the log. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ensley Feemster and carried unanimously (6-0).
- ❖ Committee recommends removing item No. 66 from the log.

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL AS A WHOLE REPORT

Council Rules – Log No. 79

- Mr. Roper stated he revised the Council Rules with the changes they suggested from the last Committee of the Whole meeting. He went through each change to confirm with council that everything looked okay.
- Councilman Trey Whitehurst asked if we decided about forming sub-committees.
- Mr. Roper stated the language stayed the same and advised council to look at Rule 6: Committees on page 17. He stated based on council comments, the language stayed the same and the only change is that it says “may” instead of “shall”.
- Councilman Wes Hendricks for an explanation on why 15.11 on page 15 are being deleted.
- Mr. Roper stated this made it mandatory that all revenue measures had to go through the Committee on County Administration and Finance. Since the committee is optional, this does not need to be mandatory.
- Seeing no other discussion, Vice Chairman Chris Bowers made a motion to remove item number 79 from the log. Motion was seconded by Councilman Carl Hudson and carried unanimously (6-0).
- ❖ Committee recommends removing item No. 79 from the log.

Review of Fire Board and Districts – Log No. 55

- Attorney Ken Roper stated in 2008, County Council made a big change in the way fire was provided in Pickens County. He stated prior to that, the county had 13 different fire districts, with 13 different rules on how they operated; some of them operated the same, and some differently. He stated the way it was set up back then was a board of commissioners for each district was formed and appointed by county council after an advisory election. He stated the only thing in the ordinance that these fire boards were tasked with doing (other than having meetings, taking citizen input, and coming up with commissioners) was to prepare a proposed operating budget. Mr. Roper explained the budget process.
- Scott Smith, Director of Emergency Services, presented a PowerPoint to council and had detailed discussion to include, but not limited to: current board members serving on each fire district board; issues with the current board system; benefits of a unified system; three different options from the Emergency Services Advisory Board, etc. He explained the Emergency Services Advisory Board has been working in conjunction with all County Fire Chiefs, since the last time the board approached council. He stated the recommendation from the County, Fire Chiefs and Emergency Services Board is to move forward with creating one unified board for discussion.
- Councilman Trey Whitehurst stated council asked the board to break into sub-committees to bring back to council.
- After more discussion, Administrator Gerald Wilson stated their plan is ready to bring forward to Council in the April Committee of the Whole meeting if the Chairman pleases. He stated what they are asking Council tonight is to consider going to one county fire board, versus 13 different boards. Mr. Wilson stated all Fire Chiefs think this is the step in the right direction to a unified structure. He stated the Emergency Board has met numerous times over the past 18 months and have invited council to be a part of those meetings.
- Vice Chairman Chris Bowers asked if the sub-committees consist of four members and the fire chiefs.
- Administrator Wilson stated that is correct.
- Chairman Roy Costner stated nothing will be changing as far as identity, fire fees, funding mechanisms, etc. He stated it will be easier to look at the board as a whole.
- Attorney Ken Roper stated this will require a change in the ordinance but we cannot move forward with a first reading until we know this is council’s long term vision.
- Councilman Wes Hendricks stated he would like to research and talk to people in his district before making a decision. He asked what the possibility of this becoming effective is if we consolidate.
- Vice Chairman Chris Bowers stated you do not have to have a consolidated fire district for this plan to be

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL AS A WHOLE REPORT

successful.

- After much more discussion, Mr. Wilson stated he attended the Emergency Services Board Meeting on February 19th and he was impressed with how well the board and Fire Chiefs work together.
- Vice Chairman Chris Bowers stated of the 13 Fire Board Districts in Pickens County today, we have only three functioning fire boards. He stated the budget falls on the Fire Chiefs for the ten fire boards not functioning. He stated we are not talking about a consolidation or the finances; we are talking about the overall picture.
- Chairman Roy Costner stated all Fire Chiefs have a voice and it is monumental that all Chiefs agree that this is a good idea. He asked since we are three months out before it actually happens, should we begin the process. Chairman Costner stated we can stop the process at any time if needed.
- Councilman Trey Whitehurst stated he feels we are going down the correct path. He stated he would like to see the identity of how the fire boards are holding together, how we are looking at personnel issues, long term budgeting, etc.
- Vineyards Fire Chief Phil Black stated the board allowed each chief to put in a request for the sub-committee they wanted to be on and the chairman came to the chiefs with a couple of board members.
- Administrator Wilson stated he was impressed with the plan they came up with.
- Councilman Trey Whitehurst stated he would like to research and talk with people in his district before making a decision. He stated he has several rural fire districts in his district and he wants to make sure everyone is on board.
- Kenny McPeters, member of Emergency Advisory Board, stated if Pickens County would have paid the board members for all the hours they have put into this plan the past 18 months, County Council would have taken it and said money well spent. He stated since it was all volunteer, it is coming back to the board that they do not have council's support for all the work they have done. He stated he has been in public service for over 30 years in Pickens County, and this is the best of the services he has ever seen.
- Councilman Carl Hudson thanked Mr. McPeters for all he has done.
- After more discussion, the Committee recommends bringing this log item back to the next Committee of the Whole meeting in March.

❖ No action taken by committee.

150th Year Celebration Timeline and Events – Log No. 96

- Motion was made by Chairman Roy Costner, seconded by Vice Chairman Chris Bowers and unanimously passed to remove item No. 96 from the log.

❖ Committee recommended removing item No. 96 from the log.

Implementation for New Federal Guidelines for Purchasing Relative to Grants – Log No. 94

- Motion was made by Councilman Ensley Feemster, seconded by Councilman Carl Hudson and unanimously passed to remove item No. 94 from the log.

❖ Committee recommended removing item No. 94 from the log.

Green Crescent Trail – Log No. 104

- Motion was made by Vice Chairman Chris Bowers, seconded by Councilman Carl Hudson and unanimously passed to remove item No. 104 from the log.

❖ Committee recommended removing item No. 104 from the log.

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL AS A WHOLE REPORT

Greer Drive – Log No. 112

- Motion was made by Councilman Carl Hudson, seconded by Vice Chairman Chris Bowers and unanimously passed to remove item No. 112 from the log.

- ❖ Committee recommended removing item No. 112 from the log.

Recreation Funding Requests – Log No. 88

- Administrator Gerald Wilson stated a council member requested a copy of recreation expenditures for the past five years and all of council has a copy of this report at their desk.
 - Chairman Costner stated he wants council to start thinking about recreation funding requests. He stated everyone has seen the requests come through the past month. He asked council what they believe the intentions are to use the recreation funding for. He stated some of the requests that have come through are all over the place and he feels it will better serve council if we have specific guidelines on what recreation funding can be used for.
 - Councilman Trey Whitehurst state he believes the guidelines that were originally set up where it is to be capital we will not be funding for operations. He stated it was to help offset some of the capital expenses. He stated in his district, it has been used for emergency situations sometimes as well. He stated growing up; recreation was run by the YMCA. He stated these municipalities got in the recreation business and have run a lot of the YMCA’s out of business. He stated he does not want to create more government competition, but some of the smaller districts who are struggling, will have to come up with a partnership to make this work.
 - Vice Chairman Chris Bower stated he feels this comes down to is determining if we want this to be a capital fund that we support our communities with. He stated a lot of times; we think recreation is organized sports, like football fields, soccer fields, baseball fields, etc. He stated that is where we spend our money when supporting our recreation departments. For example, light bulbs for the stadium, score boards, basketball floors, lawn mower parts, etc. Vice Chairman stated he feels this is not “recreation.” He stated recreation is anything that gets you out and moving passively. He stated he feels council needs to decide if we are concerned about recreation, or about supporting capital expenditures in our communities.
 - After much more discussion, Chairman Costner ended the conversation asking what the wish is from council as a whole to define recreation funding and he stated he feels asking people within the community their thoughts on how the recreation funding should work. Chairman Costner stated he would like to keep this item number on the log and bring back to the next Committee of the Whole meeting in March.
-
- ❖ No action taken by the committee.

ADJOURN:

Hearing no further Committee business, Chairman Roy Costner called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Chris Bowers, seconded by Councilman Wes Hendricks and carried unanimously. The Committee of the Whole stood adjourned at 7:51 p.m.