

Town of Pine Ridge

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IN ACCORDANCE WITH CDC/SCDHEC GUIDELINES ON SOCIAL DISTANCING, THERE WILL ONLY BE TEN CITIZENS ALLOWED IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS. THE MEETING WILL BE LIVE ON FACEBOOK. THE PUBLIC IS ENCOURAGED TO EMAIL WRITTEN COMMENTS BY 5PM, ON 12/8/2020, TO THE MUNICIPAL CLERK AT skyzer@townofpineridgesc.com

DECEMBER 22, 2020
RESCHEDULED DECEMBER 8, 2020
REGULAR SCHEDULED
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
AGENDA

Town Council Work Session

6:45 P.M. – 6:46 P.M. Review of Administrative Department Reports

6:46 P.M. – 6:51 P.M. Council Standing Committee Reports:

- a) Finance Committee-Chair Davis & Member Dinkins
- b) Public Safety Committee-Police Commissioner Wells & Member Davis
- c) Public Utilities & Health Committee-Chair Dinkins & Member Sturkie
- d) Property & Recreation Committee-Chair Simms & Member Sturkie
- e) Employee Grievance Committee-Chair Davis & Members Dinkins & Sturkie
- f) Administrative Liaison Committee-Chair Wells & Member Simms

6:51 P.M. – 6:52 P.M. Council Special Committee Report:

- a) Tree Lighting & Parade Committee-Chair Dinkins & Member Sturkie

6:52 P.M. – 6:54 P.M. Council Representative Reports:

- a) Central Midlands Regional Planning COG Representative-Simms
- b) Lexington Water & Sewer Commission Representative-Sturkie

6:54 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. Informational Council Discussion

7:00 P.M. - Town Council Meeting

Call to Order & Invocation

Freedom of Information Act Compliance

Approval of Minutes

1. November 10, 2020 Regular Scheduled Council Meeting

Old Business

1. Estates at Indigo Bond Estimate to repair infrastructure
2. Indigo Place Bond Estimate to repair infrastructure
3. Vehicle Maintenance issues update
4. Consideration of IT quotes
5. Consideration of payroll services

New Business

1. Cheryl Patrick of Sandy Creek Court: Procurement of professional services to assist with PD employment
2. Councilwoman Sturkie: Discussion & vote on changes to the Public Safety Committee
3. Consideration of hiring an Employment Consultant to conduct search for Police Chief position

Citizen's Comment Time – (email to skyzer@townofpineridgesc.com by 5pm on 12/8/2020)

ADJOURN

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Work Session Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



Council present: Mayor Wells, Mayor Pro-Tem Davis, Councilwoman Sturkie, Councilman Dinkins and Councilman Simms

Staff present: Town Administrator-Mrs. Miller, Municipal Clerk-Mrs. Kyzer and Clerk of Court-Ms. Burns

6:45 P.M. - 6:46 P.M. Review of Administrative Department Reports

Mayor Wells informed Council members that the Administrative Department Reports were in the Council packets for review and asked if there were any questions or comments regarding these reports. There were none.

6:46 P.M. - 6:48 P.M. Informational Council Discussion:

a) Security Lights at Camp Moore/Styx

Mayor Wells reported that the installation of the security lights had been completed.

b) Christmas Committee: Blessing Box/possible Library Box update

Mayor Wells asked the Christmas Committee to update Council.

Councilman Dinkins spoke regarding the Security lights, that he called Dominion to request the lights and was told that since his name was not on the account, he could not request the installation. Councilman Dinkins contacted the Town Administrator, who was able to get it done.

Councilman Dinkins stated that he spoke with Councilwoman Sturkie about moving the Blessing Box to Camp Moore/Styx, close to the new security light. Councilman Dinkins added that they also spoke about not doing a Library Box because that would be more upkeep.

Mayor Wells stated that he found out earlier in the morning that one of the storefront glass in the front of the building was shot out. Only the first layer of the two-pane glass was shattered, which will need to be replaced.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Work Session Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



Councilwoman Sturkie added that she wanted to thank Mr. Oliver for taking care of the display again at the Town signs located at the intersection of Fish Hatchery Road and Pine Ridge Drive, that it always looks phenomenal.

At this time, with no further comments, Mayor Wells closed the Work Session.

DRAFT

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



6:48 P.M. – Town Council Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Wells called the Town Council Meeting to order at 6:48 P.M. with Mayor Pro-Tem Davis, Councilman Simms, Councilman Dinkins and Councilwoman Sturkie present.

Staff present: Town Administrator-Mrs. Miller, Municipal Clerk-Mrs. Kyzer and Clerk of Court-Ms. Burns

INVOCATION

Councilman Simms led those assembled in prayer.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT COMPLIANCE

Mayor Wells stated that public notification of this meeting has been published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. October 13, 2020 – Regular Scheduled Council Meeting

Mayor Wells asked Council to review the minutes and if there were any questions or comments that Mrs. Kyzer would be available to answer.

Councilman Simms made a motion to approve the October 13, 2020, minutes as submitted. Mayor Pro-Tem Davis seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



OLD BUSINESS

1. Estates at Indigo Bond Estimate to repair infrastructure

Mayor Wells stated that as of today they are still working on Oakhill Road. They are running behind but should be done soon.

2. Indigo Place Bond Estimate to repair infrastructure

Mayor Wells stated that the County will begin looking at Indigo Place when they have completed the paving of Oakhill Road. Once they begin, they will be looking at the crossover pipes and provide a report on what their plans are.

3. Vehicle Maintenance issues update

Mayor Wells stated that this item has been kept on the agenda until all repairs have been completed. A new item has been added for the 2013 Chevrolet Tahoe.

| Vehicle | Issue |
|------------------|---|
| Slick Top Impala | 1. Camera Mount is broken |
| Marked Tahoe | 1. Tire sensor gauge is shorted 2. Dash Cam SD slot will not open as of 3/4/2020 |
| Chief Tahoe | 1. In car camera display will not turn on screen, but it records; as of 3/4/2020. 2. Cage was removed & re-installed by Silano & Neeley. 3. Driver/passenger side window tint |
| K9 Tahoe | NEW* This was written on Silano's Activity Reports for 10/6, 10/7, 10/8 & 10/9 & had not been taken to the mechanic: Front left tire makes "clunk" noise when turning left |
| Pickup Truck | Unknown |

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



4. Consideration of IT quotes

Mayor Wells stated that at the last Council meeting, it was decided to put this item out for bid again. Since it will be next year before the Town Administrator will be able to work on this, it is her recommendation to remove this item off of the agenda at this time.

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis made a motion to table this item, so that it will remain on the agenda as a reminder. Councilman Dinkins seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

5. Consideration of New Auditor

Mayor Wells asked the Finance Committee Chairman Mayor Pro-Tem Davis to update Council on the new Auditor.

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis asked that the firm of Rish and Enzastiga be considered since they were recommended by our previous Auditors, Brodie, Summers & Wilkes. Mayor Pro-Tem Davis stated that Council was not happy with the last firm and that that Council had not received the final bill or audit for year ending June 30, 2019, from McGregor & Company, LLC. State law mandates that the Town submit an annual audit or be penalized financially.

Mrs. Miller clarified that the final audit ending June 30, 2019, had been approved by Council at the Special Called meeting on July 30, 2020.

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis made a motion to secure the services of Rish and Enzastiga. Councilman Simms seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

6. Consideration of Lexington County Stormwater Utility Fee & Pine Ridge Survey results.

Mayor Wells stated that Council thought this had been taken care of last month and asked Councilman Dinkins who is Chairman of the Public Utilities & Health

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



Commission to update Council in the meeting he attended regarding the Lexington County Stormwater Utility Fee.

Councilman Dinkins discussed the following:

- Pine Ridge stormwater survey results submitted to the County in September.
- Attended a meeting on October 15th on behalf of the Town.
- Lexington County proposing a Stormwater user fee based on the amount of impervious surface a property owner has.
- Fee would be billed annually.
- An example of the fee calculation.
- Repairing outdated infrastructure and backlog of existing issues.
- Motto “The more you pave, the more you pay”.
- Flood prevention.
- County Council to vote on first reading November 10th & 2nd December 8th.
- Finance Committee recommendation to participate in the program.

The Town Administrator, Mrs. Miller asked Councilman Dinkins if he would advise Council of what the County has stated that they would no longer do for the Town, if Council did not vote to approve the Stormwater Utility fee.

Councilman Dinkins stated the following:

1. The County would not take maintenance responsibility for new roads or drainage systems associated with new construction inside the municipal boundary. All new roads and storm drainage systems will either need to be privately maintained or maintained by the municipality.
2. The County would not take maintenance responsibility of new or improved stormwater control measures (ex. Detention ponds) installed inside the municipal boundary. All new or improved stormwater control measures will need to be either privately maintained or maintained by the municipality.
3. Service requests for existing roads and drainage systems associated with roads inside the municipal boundary will need to be submitted to the County Transportation Committee (CTC) for consideration. However, the municipality may choose to make any necessary repairs utilizing their own resources.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



4. The County would no longer maintain the residential detention ponds located inside the municipal boundary.
5. The County would no longer conduct plan reviews for land development inside the municipality. If an MS4, the municipality would need to apply to SCDHEC to be able to perform delegated review and conduct plan reviews for land development in the municipality. If the municipality is not MS4, land development permit applications would need to be reviewed/approved by SCDHEC.
6. The County would no longer conduct construction inspections for land development inside the municipality. If an MS4, the municipality would need to conduct construction inspections according to the MS4 permit and CGP for land development in the municipal boundaries. If the municipality is not an MS4, land development inside the municipality.
7. The County would no longer participate as a partner with the non-participating MS4 municipality in the Lexington Countywide Stormwater Consortium (LCSC).

Councilwoman Sturkie made a motion to participate in the Lexington County Stormwater Utility fee. Councilman Simms seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

7. Town Christmas tree lighting & parade for 2020

Mayor Wells asked Councilwoman Sturkie and Councilman Dinkins to update Council.

Tree Lighting and Parade Committee Chairman Dinkins stated that he and Committee Member Sturkie had discussed the parade, Corona virus and Law Enforcement availability. Chairman Dinkins added that they decided to cancel the parade, but wanted to proceed with the Tree Lighting ceremony. Committee Member Sturkie stated that they secured a Santa and would like to change the date to November 27th from 6:30pm until 8:30pm.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



Councilman Simms made a motion to have the tree lighting festivities on November 27th, 2020. Councilman Dinkins seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Tree Lighting and Parade Committee Chairman Dinkins then asked Council if the Committee could use the money allocated for the parade towards the expenses of the Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis made the motion to use the money from the parade towards the Tree Lighting Festivities. Councilwoman Sturkie seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Cheryl Patrick of Sandy Creek Court: Request of Mayor Wells regarding Pine Ridge Police Department.

Ms. Patrick asked for an explanation from Mayor Wells regarding:

- Turnover, turmoil and tumult in the Pine Ridge Police Department.
- No town police protection/service.
- The Mayor's action plan.
- The date for a viable police force.
- The Mayor's culpability causing the entire police force to resign.
- Trusting the Mayor to rectify this situation.
- Budget for Police Department

Mayor Wells responded:

- Five members of Council, he is only one vote.
- The Mayor position is the speaker at Council meetings.
- He was there to give his opinion, not Councils and if any of Council wanted to give their opinion, they can.
- In the three years since he's been Mayor, only one officer had been terminated and the rest have either resigned or moved on to different jobs.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



- Council cannot discuss personnel matters.
- Some Officers choose resignation over termination because a separation report goes to the Police Academy, in which they require an explanation if the Officer was terminated. The Academy goes through the process of finding out why an Officer is terminated, so the Officer doesn't go to another place with the same problem.
- Lack of Officers throughout the State

Councilwoman Sturkie apologized to Ms. Patrick for interrupting and asked Mayor Wells if he was saying that all of the Officers that resigned, did so because they did not want to be terminated. Mayor Wells replied no, that he meant that if they felt like they were going to be terminated, that they would prefer to resign.

Mayor Wells stated that Lexington County will continue to respond to calls and that Council is discussing something different in Executive Session tonight in the hiring of the police chief position.

2. RFP19-04 Cleaning of Municipal Complex for 2021- option to renew for additional year

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis made the motion to renew the Cleaning of the Municipal Complex by Hollis Building Services for 2021. Councilwoman Sturkie seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



3. RFP18-06 HVAC Maintenance & Repairs for 2021- option to renew for additional year

Councilman Dinkins made the motion to renew the HVAC Maintenance & Repairs for 2021, to Cullum Services, Inc. Councilwoman Sturkie seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

4. RFP18-04 Public Defender Services for 2021 - option to renew for additional year

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis made the motion to renew the Public Defender Services for 2021, with The Pinilla Law Firm, LLC. Councilman Simms seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

5. Consideration of payroll services

Mayor Wells turned the discussion over to the Finance Committee.

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis updated Council with the information regarding what the Payroll Service would be able to provide and the cost of their services. He also stated that he thought it was in the interest of the town to invite Palmetto Payroll Solutions to come in with a presentation.

Mayor Wells called for a motion and second to table the item at this time.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



Councilman Dinkins made a motion to table this item. Councilman Simms seconded the motion and a vote was taken. All Members of Council voted in favor of tabling the item, with the exception of Councilwoman Sturkie.

At this time, the Town Administrator asked Mayor Wells to go back to Old Business, Item #7 for a Council vote to cancel the Christmas parade.

Mayor Wells called for a motion and a second to cancel the 2020 Christmas parade.

Councilman Simms made the motion to cancel the 2020 parade. Councilwoman Sturkie seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

6. Finance Committee update: Decoration of Town Signs

Mayor Wells turned the discussion over to the Finance Committee.

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis commended Mr. Oliver on his time and talent in decorating the Town Sign area. The Finance Committee has approved reimbursement to Mr. Oliver, pending submission of receipts.

7. Employee Service Recognition

Mayor Wells stated that Town Council has annually used this time of year to recognize staff contributions to the town, in the form of a Christmas bonus. Mayor Wells asked what the pleasure of Council would be on this item.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



Councilwoman Sturkie made a motion to turn this item over to the Finance Committee. Councilman Dinkins seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

8. 2021 Meeting and Holiday Schedule

Mayor Wells stated that on an annual basis, Town Council approves a “Meeting & Holiday Schedule” for the upcoming calendar year, which is required by law to publish at the beginning of every calendar year. The court dates have been confirmed by Judge Whittle.

Councilwoman Sturkie stated there was an error in the date of November 8th, which is a Monday. The Town Administrator confirmed that it should read November 9th, 2021.

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis made a motion to approve the 2021 Meeting and Holiday Schedule, with the correction of November 8th to November 9th, 2021. Councilman Dinkins seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

9. Council Committee discussion

Mayor Wells turned this item over to Councilwoman Sturkie, since she had requested this item to be placed on the agenda for Council discussion.

Councilwoman Sturkie stated that in light of the situation in regards to the constant turnaround of the Police Department, Chief and Officers resigning and due to the environment referred to in the letters of those who have resigned, she would like to make a motion to remove Robert Wells as Police Commissioner and from the Public Safety Committee completely, and have Floyd Dinkins fill that vacancy as an equal member to that committee alongside Daniel Davis.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



Councilman Dinkins seconded the motion, which opened the item up for discussion.

The Town Administrator advised Council that the motion could be made and approved, but it would not be legal until a public hearing and two readings of the proposed ordinance was approved.

Council discussed the following:

- Management styles
- Officer job duties
- Personnel matters
- Change in committees
- Public trust
- Members of Council not receiving all information
- Hiring committee
- Officers speaking to Members of Council
- Transparency

Mayor Wells called for a roll call vote.

Councilman Simms – no

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis – no

Mayor Wells – no

Councilman Dinkins – yes

Councilwoman Sturkie – yes

10. Adjourn to Executive Session

- a) Discussion of negotiations of possible contract for obtaining candidates for employment for police chief, 30-4-70 (a) (1) & 30-4-70 (a) (2)

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



Councilman Dinkins made a motion that council go into executive session to discuss negotiation of a possible contract for obtaining candidates for employment in the Police Chief position. This is allowed by SC Code of Laws, Section 30-4-70 (a)(1), which includes discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body and SC Code of Laws, Section 30-4-70 (a)(2), which allows the discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements. A second was made by Councilman Simms, which was unanimously approved.

Mayor Wells asked those in attendance to leave the building, as Council needed to remain in the Council Chambers for Executive Session, as the meeting room is filled with things that used to be in Council Chambers before Covid-19.

11. Reconvene to Regular Session

Councilman Simms made a motion to resume the Regular Scheduled meeting. Councilman Dinkins seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Mayor Wells stated that no votes were taken during Executive Session other than to adjourn and resume the meeting.

12. Possible Actions by Council in follow up to Executive Session

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis made a motion that Council solicit the services of a reputable, professional employment agency to conduct the search for a Police Chief for the Town of Pine Ridge. Councilman Dinkins seconded the motion, which opened the item up for discussion.

Mayor Pro-Tem Davis stated that doing this will address some of the concerns expressed tonight by the lack of transparency and that it will take the council out of a position to do that search. Mayor Pro-Tem Davis added that it will address the issue that's been brought up about the lack of experience on this Council in law enforcement. The Agency will have someone who has experience in hiring law

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



enforcement and will bring Council candidates for consideration. The interviews can be structured so that every Council Member will have an opportunity to participate in the process and give their opinion.

A vote was taken, which was unanimously approved by all Council Members.

Citizens Comment Time

Mrs. Judith Cooper-Basamania of Coolbrook Drive

Mrs. Kyzer, Municipal Clerk read aloud an email submitted by Mrs. Cooper-Basamania, who was in attendance earlier but had left.

Mrs. Cooper-Basamania stated in her email that in recent years it has become a town where:

- Slumlords take over residential streets without fear of punishment
- Award winning schools have to fear students bringing in guns
- No longer have a Police Department to protect and serve
- Law Enforcement Officers come here to end their career
- Committees meet making decisions without a vote from Council members
- Opposition to the suspension of the K9 Program.
- Mayor Wells should resign.
- The people of Pine Ridge will not stop exercising their 1st Amendment rights until Mayor Wells resigns and the Pine Ridge Police Department is restored.

The Municipal Clerk added that there was a post-it note attached to Mrs. Cooper-Basamania's email that she handed , stating that she did not necessarily agree with all request for reforms and that she was conveying what others asked her too.

TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020



Mrs. Jennifer Barrier of Pond Drive

Mrs. Barrier spoke about the following:

- Mayor has been asked several times to step down as Police Commissioner.
- Council works for the residents.
- Council is not listening to the residents.
- Petition from 200 people (180 residents) that want Mayor Wells gone.
- Petition will be delivered to a higher authority by Councilwoman Sturkie.
- 2021 election of Council

Ms. Beth Sturkie of JC Lane

Councilwoman Sturkie stated that she wished to speak to Council as a Citizen and spoke about the following:

- Asked Mayor Wells to step down from the Public Safety Committee as a Council Member and now as a citizen of the Town of Pine Ridge.
- Mayor Wells bulldozed the Police Department.
- Council elected to represent residents & it is not being done.

Mrs. Maria Urbanek of Brookfield Circle

Mrs. Urbanek asked for an update on the Police vehicle that was set on fire and destroyed.

Mayor Wells replied that although it was Citizen Comment Time, that the investigation had been turned over to Lexington County, who turned it over to the ATF. Mayor Wells was unaware of any updates on the case.

**TOWN OF PINE RIDGE
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Scheduled Council Meeting
November 10, 2020**



Adjourn

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Pro-Tem made the motion to adjourn, with a second by Councilman Dinkins. With Council's unanimous approval, Mayor Wells adjourned the meeting at 8:18P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Kyzer, Municipal Clerk

APPROVED:

Robert M. Wells, Jr., Mayor

Date: _____