

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF PIEDMONT

January 21, 2025

5:35 PM

The City Council of the City of Piedmont met in regular session at the time and on the date above. Present were Mayor Baker, Council Members Richard Williams, Jubal Feazell, Caleb Pope, Greg South, David Ivey, and Terry Kiser.

Following the invocation and the pledge of allegiance given by Mayor Baker, the minutes were presented for consideration. Terry Kiser made the motion that the minutes be approved as presented. Richard Williams seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

The bills totaling \$1,107,229.77 were then presented for consideration for payment. Richard Williams made the motion that the bills be approved as presented. Caleb Pope seconded the motion and the bills were approved for payment.

Resolution 2025-01 was the next item on the agenda. Terry Kiser made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-01. Richard Williams seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Resolution 2025-02 was next. David Ivey made the motion to approve Resolution 2025-02. Richard Williams seconded the motion and the motion carried.

In the Police report, Chief Johnson gave the Council the month of January and the year ending 2024 police reports to review. He also handed out new pay scale and hazard pay request. Jubal Feazell made a motion to give all certified police officers a \$100 per pay period hazard pay increase. This would be a \$1.19 increase per hour. David Ivey seconded the motion and a roll call vote was requested. Richard Williams – Yes, Jubal Feazell – Yes, Caleb Pope – Yes, Greg South – No, David Ivey – Yes, Terry Kiser – Yes, Bill Baker – No. The motion passed with a 5-2 vote. Caleb Pope made a motion to table phase 2 of the police increase. Jubal Feazell seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Chief Kirkland gave the January fire report along with the 2024 annual fire report.

There were no visitor comments.

In Council reports, John Lawrence was absent.

Richard Williams told the Council that there are two ways for the City to get revenue. One is sales tax / business license and the other is utility bills. We do not get a lot of new businesses so you can't depend on an increase in sales tax to increase revenue. We need to raise the utility rates as directed by the Cost of Service Study and move forward. City services, such as limb pickup, junk pickup, and leaf pickup all cost money to do. He said the citizens will be mad but the increase is needed for the City. If everyone would stay off of face book the problem might not be as big.

Jubal Feazell appreciates the Council for some assistance on the police pay increase. He hopes this small increase will keep the officers from leaving the City. In closing, he wanted to thank the street department for picking up limbs and leaves in District 3.

Caleb Pope echoed what Richard said on the utility increase. He asked what the holdup was on implementing the new rates. He asked about the fluctuation of the fuel surcharge and would it need to be adjusted monthly. We need to execute the increase of the utility rates. He asked for Mayor and Clerk to meet with Corey and get a timeframe on when the new rates will go into effect. He would love to see everyone get more money but public safety needs to take priority. Public safety is our number one goal for the City administration. He feels the Council needs to challenge themselves to find a solution instead of putting it back on the department heads. In closing, he wants to thank all the City employees for all the hard work they do.

Greg South appreciates all the guys in public safety and the work they do. He believes that we need to control what we spend and how we spend it. We do not need to increase the portion of the pie to operate the City. The more the pie grows the more we will have to charge for utility rates to make it work out.

David Ivey wanted to thank all City employees for working out in the cold. He wanted to let everyone know that the 2025 Lowe's Grant is open for application. They will award 100 projects this year. He feels that City park upgrades will be the direction that grant application needs to follow. This would be paving, playground equipment, landscaping, and signage. The grant has to be submitted by February 18, 2025. He will handle getting the information and pricing for the grant.

Terry Kiser wanted to echo what all the other council members said tonight. He said we need to do something for our employees. We need to come up with something.

Clerk Hinton told everyone that he had been approached by Sandra Keener concerning purchasing two new vehicles for the Piedmont Health Care Board. He told them that the Healthcare Board will pay the City the cost of the vehicles before purchasing. Terry Kiser made the motion to approve the purchase of two new vehicles for the Piedmont Health Care Authority. Richard Williams seconded the motion and the motion carried. He told that the trail paving should begin on February 3, 2025. The street paving was complete with the exception of painting stop bars. He asked the Council to consider a price for the 10 acres in the Industrial Park. In closing, he asked for the Council to be thinking on a monthly rental rate for a small building located on the Chief Ladiga Trail that is owned by the City.

In the Mayor's comments he said that we have had extreme cold temperatures. He is thankful for all City employees. He said that Richard hit the nail on the head with the City needing to increase utilities. This will help with the wage increase. The increase would also allow us to receive extra money, which would allow us to provide improvements to city services. The total rate will still be cheaper than our neighboring providers. Jeff Formby asked the Council if they would change the Recreation Board Meeting dates to quarterly. Caleb Pope made the motion. Terry Kiser seconded the motion and the motion carried. Jeff also informed the Council that Rec Desk was doing really good with registration and event planning.

With no other business to come before the Council, Caleb Pope made the motion that the meeting be adjourned. Terry Kiser seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm.