

Town of Pelzer Council Meeting

Minutes

August 8, 2023

Amended Version 9/15/23.

Council Present – Will Ragland, Donna Ide, Mike Mathews, Eddie Waits

Staff Present – Cheryl Bates, Town Attorney – Richard Thompson, Press – David Meade

1. Call to Order Meeting – Mayor Ragland

2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance – Mike Matthews

3. Citizen's Comments –

- a. **Amber Chaney** – Hello council members and fellow citizens of Pelzer my name is Amber Chaney, and I am a concerned citizen regarding recent actions lies and abuse of power by councilmember Donna Ide towards community member Kimberly Majors. Unfortunately, Kimberly Majors is unable to be here tonight. She runs a small business, and they have their auction every Tuesday at seven, but I am her sister so I'm here to speak on her behalf. I have copies of emails she let me have all the correspondences that happened between her and Miss Ide. So, if anyone is interested in the copies, I did not make enough copies. I did not know that there would be this many people here. But to summarize what has happened on July 14, Miss Ide reached out to Miss Major stating that a unanimous vote has taken place, again amongst the council members to increase the rental rate for the Zumba class that Miss Majors holds here in the Pelzer gym. It was later revealed by councilmember Miss Alicia Tuttle that no unanimous vote had taken place. But then in another email sent on July 17 Ms. Ide told Miss Majors that Mayor Ragland himself had asked her to reach out about the decision, and if a contract needed to be drafted, this has often been shared to be untrue. Since all this unfolded, Ms. Ide has remained silent. She has not reached out to anyone, including Ms. Majors, to offer an explanation or at least an apology for what happened. Her silence is yet another mark against her character, in my opinion. Pelzer deserves council members who will be honest, authentic, and be willing to own their missteps when they may have heard it makes, I can call this much controversy over a Zumba class. I for one fearful of what LG is capable of for the citizens of Pelzer. I have grown up in Pelzer my entire life. I only moved away to attend college and graduate school and I inherited my grandparents' home and have restored it. Unfortunately, I did not even realize that there was a need to be involved in town council. I was ignorant of that. But moving forward I plan to be here at as many meetings as I can because we Pelzer Our citizens deserve members of council who are number one going to be honest it up fold the truth and not misrepresent themselves and abuse their power. And I believe that is what we've seen in these emails by this time. blatantly lying is not a good look for a council member. And I hope tonight that Miss Ide can provide answers for her actions. And ultimately, I hope that we eventually see her resignation from Council.

- b. **Theresa Howard** – Thank you for the opportunity to speak, I am also part of the dance class here at the Pelzer gym. I am not a Pelzer citizen, I am from Greenville, South Carolina drive from Greenville every Monday and Thursday nights to attend this dance class. I am a diabetic and I have struggled with diabetes for a while insulin dependent. I came with the hopes of getting results medically to better myself and that is exactly what I found in coming here. I had a friend that invited me, and I have been coming ever since paying \$5 to class for an hour and I am telling you Kim pours her heart out in our dance class. She gives us more than what I would give within an hour at any gym. She is a motivator. She is an encourager. And since coming and I want to say I have fallen in love with the town of Pelzer. You all are just kind citizens; I have not met anybody that unkind. I have supported some of your businesses here, especially the Mexican restaurant, which I dearly love. And so, I just feel compelled to bring you tonight, a definition of what it means to be unethical. You all took an oath when you were elected by your people to this office. And I also want to stop and just say, I appreciate you, Mayor, for being honest and coming forward. I appreciate you for coming to our dance class. And talking with us. I appreciate the fact that I introduced myself to you tonight. And you have already extended the opportunity to talk with you even after meeting. So, I just want to say thank you. Unethical, Here's the definition of unethical, not conforming to a high moral standard, morally wrong, not ethical, illegal, and unethical business practices, immoral and unethical behavior. This is why your council woman has presented when she did what she did. It is unethical. And I just want to say I do think that she should resign her position if nothing else for being unethical and not getting a vote. Because if this goes to the Ethics Committee, there will be an investigation and she very well could be found unethical. Thank you.
- c. **Kenny Andrews** – Yeah, I just wanted to bring up a few things here. What should have been on old business says no business at all. I am just wondering, where we stand against air conditioning in the gymnasium. So, you know, we haven't heard anything in a while. I do not think that that can do both. I think that should be brought up on old business, where you stand with following up on what is going to happen. And the other thing is, as a lot of people are complaining about which wildflowers out there with like weeds, they are an eyesore and makes the town look dumpy. And I think they need to be pulled up. Those are good on a field, top of a bank or something like that, where you can see the top stuff and hopefully not be using it to a real bad. A lot of people are saying the same thing. That's all.
- d. **Scott Larsen** – on behalf of the Election Commission recommended the Town Council to appoint Kelly Rugerio as a candidate for the Election Commission. She and her family have lived here for a few years.
- e. **Laura Rainey** – stated that there are open seats available on the Planning Commission. If interested, please stop by the office, or call Cheryl and get an application.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

- a. **July 11 Council Meeting** – Mayor Ragland moved that the minutes of the July 11, 2023, be approved as prepared by the clerk. There was no second, so no action was taken for lack of a second. Later in the meeting, Town Attorney Richard Thompson suggested that two members of the council propose a version of the minutes which could receive three votes

for approval. Under the Freedom of Information Act, no three members of the council can meet at one time without having a meeting which requires notice from the public.

5. Clerk's Report/Presentation

- a. **Maintenance Department** – 3 work orders in July - 1 to connect services and 2 miscellaneous.
- b. **Police Coverage July 2023** – Traffic Stops – 51, Contacts – 81, Calls for Service – 12, Arrest -3 (one of the deputies had a vehicle towed, meth was located, and there is an open investigation for this)
- c. **Election – November 7th, 2023 – 2 Council Seats**
 - a. **Filing Opens – August 9, 2023 @ noon**
 - b. **Filing Closes – August 23, 2023 @ noon**

d. Deposit Refunds – I am working on refunding the deposits we had in our accounts, they should all be in the mail by the end of the week.

e. Greenville Water Bills – the Greenville water bills should be arriving the week of August 14th and will be due September 4th.

f. Kyle Campbell, Preservation South – Community Building restoration updates – Mayor Ragland stated that Kyle Campbell was supposed to be here but was unable to attend due to illness, would like to invite all back to hear his updates.

6. Old Business – None

7. New Business - None

8. Announcements – None

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

10. REQUEST BY CONCIL:

- a. **Donna Ide – Councilwoman Ide read her speech regarding the Gym rental controversy (on recorded meeting).**
- b. **Mayor Ragland advised that the town is now working with Duke Energy on the last batch of streetlights for the town and getting more lighting with the assistance of Anderson County at the Upper Kayak launch.**
- c. **Mike Matthews spoke on the Gym controversy.**

12. ADJOURNMENT – Eddie Waits made the motion to adjourn the meeting, Donna Ide 2nd the motion to adjourn, all in favor.



Pelzer Gym.m4a August 8, 2023 Council Meeting.m4a

**** RECORDING OF AUGUST 8, 2023, TOWN OF PELZER COUNCIL MEETING**