Walhalla approves hospitality tax of 2%

Also, a first reading that would ban drivers from reading emails or text messages was passed

BY JESSICA SIBLEY
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WALHALLA — Restaurant owners and visitors to the city need to get ready for the implementation of a 2 percent hospitality tax that will take effect July 1.



Edwards

Following the February city council meeting, members unanimously voted to impose the tax that will generate money for tourism-related projects around the city, including opening the pool, beautifying Main Street and marketing the city for vacationers as a whole.

"I want to thank the restaurant owners and the residents for their handling with this hospitality tax," Mayor Danny Edwards said. "This council did its homework and considered the interest of everyone. As time goes by, it will be noticeable that the money generated is making the city a better place to be and to come visit."

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In addition to passing the tax ordinance, councilman James Powell presented the first reading of an ordinance that will impact drivers who choose to text while behind the wheel.

The first reading that would ban drivers from reading emails or text messages was passed with a 6-1 vote, with Tjay Bagwell casting the dissenting vote.

In West Union, a "no texting while driving" ban was implemented in November and costs violators a $100 fine plus court costs.

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Pool meeting scheduled for Feb. 28

As far as opening the city pool is concerned, chair of the pool task force, Henry Biemann, said that the first meeting for interested residents to become part of the committee is scheduled for 6 p.m. Feb. 28 at the Walhalla Depot.

In other citywide news, councilwoman Jennifer Crawford said that there are talks going on with the South Carolina Department of Transportation to paint crosswalks on Main Street, while councilman Josh Holliday made a motion to spend $36,900 on a new metal roof for Walhalla's water plant.

"It has a 40-year warranty and because of the leaky roof, there are portions of the building that currently cannot be used," Holliday said.

Walhalla administrator Nancy Goehle stated that the said amount was available in the budget and the council voted unanimously to accept the bid.

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