

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, agendas for the following meeting were mailed to all members of Council, County Attorney Richard Ness, Lower Savannah COG, *The Advertiser-Herald*, *The Times and Democrat*, SouthernCarolina Regional Alliance, Bamberg County Library, Bamberg County Website, Bamberg County Courthouse Annex and a copy posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the County Courthouse.

Bamberg County Council met 6:30 p.m., December 2, 2019 in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard, Reverend Isaiah Odom, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr., Larry Haynes and Clint Carter (*arrived 6:50 p.m.*). **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Adam Ness, Dionne Gleaton, Shakora Bamberg, Gina Smith, Dave Clayton, Gail Ellis, Sue Clayton, Danny Singleton, Betty Singleton, Latarcha Wilson, Booker Patrick, Alice Johnson, Ruthie Brown, Jerry Bell and approximately 12 additional people

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard at 6:30 p.m., in the Chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Evert Comer, Jr., followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilwoman Sharon Hammond.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the minutes from the November 4, 2019 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the agenda. After the approval of the agenda, Councilwoman Hammond requested public comments be moved and placed as a public presentation item. Another motion was then made by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Comer, to move public comments from the end of the agenda and placed under public presentations.

Administrator Preston presented Captain Latarcha Wilson, director of the Bamberg County Detention Center, with the Employee of the Quarter Award. Captain Wilson was selected among her peers to receive the award for the quarter.

At this time, Chairman Kinard recognized the public that had signed up prior the beginning of the meeting to make public comments. The following citizens made comments: Dave Clayton (appealed to the public to support the new grocery store and businesses in Bamberg County); Gail Ellis (concerned about the purchase of 3 trucks and raises for designated employees); Danny Singleton (the need for Bamberg and Denmark to work together with one another and the need for Bamberg County to hire more local people); John Gleaton (concerned that citizens are transferring their vehicles out of the county to avoid paying, according to his interpretation, high taxes). All statements and concerns were taken under consideration.

A public hearing was conducted to consider a proposed ordinance authorizing the transfer of certain real property. It was explained to the public that the property referred to and located in Denmark, was being transferred to Southern Carolina Alliance for an economic development project. Pegasus Home Fashions, a manufacturer of bedding and home products, will occupy the former Masonite building located in Denmark, and they expect to bring 113 new jobs to Bamberg County. One citizen commented on the hearing. No negative impact was encountered.

Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce Director Jerry Bell gave an update on the upcoming events for Bamberg County. Director Bell informed everyone of Sheriff Ed Darnell being awarded Citizen of the Year, also known as the Waddy Thompson Award, at the Bamberg County Chamber of

Commerce Banquet. Other events were discussed, flyers were distributed to the public and all present were encouraged to support the events.

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported the county's income in October was \$1,426,702, with expenditures of \$680,235.01, leaving a positive balance of \$746,467.25. Ms. Johnson spoke of a negative bank balance after subtracting September's balance with a negative balance of \$77,549.34. During the report Chairman Kinard responded that we were \$478,368.89 in the red last year during this same time, now we're \$77,594.34. The difference shown is a great significance. Bamberg County Controller Gina Smith responded that it is important to look back and review to see what the balances were in previous years. The county is in much better shape than we were in past years in terms of the account that was reported on along with other accounts.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund as \$1,777,827 in year-to-date revenues at the end of October, with expenditures of \$2,270,976. All departments are continuing to operate within their budgets.

Administrator Preston reported on the following: **1)** Veterans Memorial Park – Most of the brickwork is done and flag poles have been installed. Anyone wanting to purchase personalized bricks at the memorial, needs to do so as soon as possible; **2)** Cameras have been installed at the site to hopefully prevent vandalism; **3)** Seven contractors have submitted bids for the construction of the fire substation in the Edisto community; **4)** Bamberg County has secured a \$250,000 state grant from DHEC to assist with renovations of the old hospital into a law enforcement and health services complex with Phase 2 coming along later that which will probably be DSS; **5)** Working along with the City of Bamberg and they are working with FLC regarding downtown property and the development of a recreation master plan. Denmark-Tech will be included in the development of the master plan development; **6)** Ten jobs are available at the Brubaker Farm in Govan; **7)** Pegasus will be offering 113 jobs for the county; **8)** There are several companies looking at the SPEC building; **9)** The C-Fund Committee voted to fund \$50,000 toward the improvement of Railroad Avenue. They will be resealing and striping and doing some curb work around the shopping center in Bamberg. The Council accepted this report as information.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) - Board meeting, December 19 in Walterboro.
- 2) LSCOG - Board meeting, December 12 in Blackville.
- 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) - Still trying to get the \$1 million back for Bamberg County.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilmen Haynes, Odom and Guess, council approved second reading of a proposed ordinance authorizing the transfer of certain real property from Bamberg County to Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance and other related matters.

The members of the Council approved the calendar of events after adding the Lower Savannah Council of Governments December 12th meeting to the calendar of events.

Chairman Kinard called for comments from the Council. All were thanked for attending the meeting and voicing their concerns. Shakora Bamberg was welcomed as a news reporter from *The Advertiser Herald*. After the untimely death of Jerry Halmon, Ms. Bamberg will be replacing him. Council wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rose R. Shepherd, CCC