

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 Bamberg Leader*, *The Times and Democrat*, Southern Carolina Regional Alliance, Bamberg County Library, Bamberg County Website and Bamberg County Courthouse Annex.

In Light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bamberg County Council met 6:00 p.m., January 9, 2023 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside live streaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Chairman Spencer Donaldson, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Phil Myers, Jr., Evert Comer, Jr., Clint Carter and Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II. **Absent:** Councilman Larry Haynes. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Alice Johnson, Chip Maier, Donald Kirby, Loretta Goodman, Cheri Goodman, William Molnar, John Fleming and three additional visitors.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Spencer Donaldson at 6:00 p.m. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Phil Myers, followed with the pledge of allegiance led by Councilman Clint Carter.

On motion by Dr. Goodman, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the minutes from the December 5, 2022 regular meeting with necessary corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Carter, the agenda was approved as submitted.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Myers, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond of District #2 and Councilman Evert Comer, Jr., of District #6 were sworn in by Bamberg County Probate Judge Donna B. Brown. They both will be serving another four year term. It was read into the record that Councilman Larry Haynes of District #3 was absent, but had been previously sworn in on Friday, January 6, 2023 by Clerk to Council, Rose R. Shepherd.

After changing of the gavel from outgoing Chairman Spencer Donaldson to incoming Chairman Dr. Jonathan Goodman, Chairman Goodman presented Councilman Donaldson with a service award for his tenure as Bamberg County Council Chairman for calendar year 2022. Councilman Donaldson commented that he was appreciative for the opportunity to have served and looks forward to continuing to work with Chairman Goodman, Vice Chairman Comer, Administrator Preston and members of Council, while continuing to work for the progress and success for the citizens.

Chairman Goodman articulated his ambition to advance into this new year as chairman, and looks forward to working with the Council, Administrator Preston, and the County citizens to make Bamberg County a great place to live, work, and grow.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, Council accepted the selection of Vice Chairman by district rotation of Councilman Evert Comer, Jr., as set forth by Bamberg County Policy and Rules. Vice Chairman Comer announced his enthusiasm toward how far Bamberg County has advanced over the last several years and believes the best is yet to come in 2023.

January 9, 2023....continued

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:

Southern Carolina Alliance – Monthly Report

In the absence of Southern Carolina Alliance Project Manager Brian Warner, Southern Carolina Alliance Development Director John Fleming gave an update of projects concerning Bamberg County. Being pleased about the announcement of the expansion of an existing Bamberg County industry, it's being announced under the code name of Project Homegrown. They are expecting a \$2.8 million capital investment and expecting to increase its job market up to a total of 30 jobs. The Council thanked Mr. Fleming for his report.

Bamberg County Treasurer – Monthly Report

County Treasurer Alice Johnson gave the November financial report, stating they had \$989,685.41 in income and expenditures of \$879,538.41, leaving a positive balance of \$110, 147. When the negative bank balance at the end of October (\$146,104.90) was added, the county's regular account stood at a negative \$35,957.90. This report was accepted as information.

Bamberg County Finance – Monthly Report

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund had year-to-date revenues of \$2,598,754 as of the end of November. Expenditures stood at \$3,464,936, for a negative general fund balance of \$866,182. With tax notices being mailed out, revenues in December and January 30, 2023 should increase. The county departments are continuing to operate within their budgets. This report was received as information.

Bamberg County Controller – Monthly Report

Controller Gina Smith gave an overall synopsis of the finances as pointed out in Treasurer Johnson's report. Ms. Smith said that the balance in the county's regular account will increase as the tax revenues continue to come in.

Bamberg County Administrator – Monthly Report

Administrator Preston informed that he is currently working on establishing a date for the next C-Fund Committee meeting. There are several C-Fund Committee projects in progress and one of the largest being improvement of roads within Denmark Technical College. Bids will be in for the C-Fund paving projects at 2 p.m. on January 26th. Everyone will be informed once the C-Fund Committee meeting is established. During the freezing temperatures on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, there were waterlines at the old hospital that froze and broke and had to be repaired. As it relates to the old courthouse renovation project, all the hazardous materials in the building has been completely removed. The only thing that hasn't been removed is the roof and that will be done when it is replaced. It was also reported that the audit for the county has been completed and please note that this is the earliest ever that it's been completed. A presentation will be done shortly and we're excited because if things are in order, you can audit books when they're in order. Furniture is scheduled to be delivered at the law enforcement center around the second or third week of February and hopefully by then the

January 9, 2023....continued

exterior renovations are going to be completed enough to where we can schedule an opening for the sheriff at the end of February or the first portion of March. It was mentioned that Colston is asking for assistance and wants help to build a new fire department in their community. Administrator Preston reminded everyone of that the Lower Savannah COG will be conducting a needs assessment hearing for the public on Tuesday, January 26th at 5:30 p.m., at the County Council Chambers. Dr. Molnar, LSCOG Executive Director responded that with gathering the information and concerns from the community, then they are able to look for funding and let the federal and the state governments know that when they are applying for specific funds, that these needs have been conveyed by the communities. The council thanked Administrator Preston for his report.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved first reading of a proposed ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of an infrastructure credit agreement to provide for infrastructure credits to Project Homegrown; and other related matters. Mr. John Fleming of LSCOG pointed out that the company's name will be announced at the third reading of the ordinance.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved a resolution amendment to amended and restated master agreement for the establishment of the Quad County Industrial Park I, Park II and Park III dated May 6, 2013 (Project Homegrown). It was reminded that under the revenue sharing agreement among the counties, the host county for the incoming industry will receive 70 percent of the tax revenues, with the other three counties involved receiving 10 percent.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Carter, the calendar of events was accepted as presented.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the reappointment of Mr. Jerry Bell to the LSCOG board as a public representative member from Bamberg County.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Carter, council approved the reappointment of Ms. Rena Riddle to the Thoroughbred Country Tourism Advisory Committee.

Chairman Goodman called for public comments during this section of the meeting. No public comments were made.

During comments from council, they thanked the public for attending, thanked the employees for their diligence and hard work, and looking forward to working together, congratulations were extended to those responsible for the audit and all were told to stay safe. Dr. Goodman closed out the comments by thanking his wife and mother for being present and challenged everyone to do what's right for Bamberg County and look forward to a great year.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, Clerk to Council