

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

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June 4, 2018

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*, Southern Carolina 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., June 4, 2018 in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Vice Chairman Trent Kinard, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Isaiah Odom, Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr. and Larry Haynes. **Absent:** Chairman Clint Carter. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Adam Ness, Dionne Gleaton, Jerry Halmon, Alice Johnson, Mary Tilton, Jerry Bell, Sidney Evering, Gina Smith, Sarah Noel, Angie Stringer, Ruthie Brown, James "Pedie" Hiers, Wallace Hicks, John Perry, Don Kirby and Bill Johnson.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Trent Kinard at 6:30 p.m., in the Chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. Invocation was rendered by Reverend Isaiah Odom, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Larry Haynes.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved the minutes from the May 7, 2018 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the recommendation presented by recreation committee member Ms. Janeth Walker, for approval of fiscal year 2017-2018 Bamberg County Recreation grant funds allocation of \$14,000 for the Bamberg County 26 participating groups. The Bamberg County Recreation Committee recommended the 26 applicants of which 24 were granted \$547.25, 1 was granted \$466.00 and 1 was granted \$400.00 all totaling \$14,000.

South Carolina Alliance Senior Project Manager Darrell Booker informed the Bamberg County Administration office that he would not be present at this evening's meeting, but would give a full report at the July meeting. Councilman Kinard stated that within the past 6 months they have (SCA) attended one or two meetings.

Bamberg County Chamber President Jerry Bell gave an update on upcoming events within the county. Flyers listing additional events in the community were distributed to the citizens present. A six-mile river trip is scheduled for Saturday, July 7 at 9:30 a.m. beginning at Bobcat Landing. The Farmer's Market was sponsored by Family Health in Denmark and it was a success. Mr. Bell encouraged everyone to support the events within the county. The update was accepted as information.

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Treasurer Alice Johnson reported that the county's total income in April was \$853,702, with expenditures coming in at \$831,208, leaving a positive balance of \$22,494.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund generated \$6,048,295 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of April. Expenditures stood at almost \$5,552,744, leaving a positive balance of \$495,551. The county continue to operate within their budget and bounds.

Administrator Preston reported that the county hopes to begin construction on the veterans' monument and memorial walking trail within the next few weeks. Bamberg County has submitted an application for a grant of \$3.5 through USDA Rural Development's Community Connect Grant Program to expand broadband access to underserved rural areas. The county is partnering with Orangeburg Broadband to build the system. Bamberg County received a letter from Hi-Ki-Pen regarding the Carlisle Military gathering held in April. The town of Govan was hit over the weekend and some damage was done to area homes and fallen trees. Also, a fire safety meeting is scheduled for Thursday at 6 p.m.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) -Meeting at USC Salkehatchie – June 14, 2018.
 - 2) LSCOG -No report.
 - 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) - No report.
 - 3) LSCOG Housing Consortium - Met May 21 in Orangeburg. HUD will be fading out soon.
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On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the request to remove until June 11, 2018 second reading of the Capital Project Sales Tax ordinance.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, second reading of a proposed ordinance for transfer of easement to Palmetto Telephone for fiber optic cable

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, council approved first reading, in title only, an ordinance restructuring the Keep Bamberg County Beautiful Advisory Board.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, council approved first reading, in title only, to a proposed ordinance to adopt the operating and capital budgets of Bamberg County for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2018 and ending June 30, 2019, and to make appropriations for such Bamberg County budgets for county ordinary purposes and for other county purposes for which the county may levy a tax; t provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real estate properties in Bamberg County for such ordinary purposes, including sufficient tax to pay the principal and interest on outstanding indebtedness of Bamberg County maturing during said fiscal year; and to provide for other matters relating to Bamberg County and Bamberg County budgetary matters. Controller Gina Smith gave a preview of budgetary difficulties the county will be facing this coming fiscal year. This will include the challenges of covering increasing health insurance and retirement contribution costs. Also, an increasing shortfall of more than \$2 million in local government funding since 2008. The county is budgeting \$1,013,000 – a \$276,000

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increase from last year – to cover health insurance premium increases for the employees. The Retirement Funding and Administration Act of 2017, the retirement fund has also required higher contributions from the county and the employees. A proposed increase of the \$30 road user fee – to increase \$1 per year for the next five years. This fee was created to help fund the road maintenance department. Also, proposed was a one-time tax levy that would be assessed against both vehicles and homes.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, council approved a proposed resolution to support the development of a state supported flight school at Denmark Technical and the Bamberg County Airport.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved a resolution authorizing the approval of a direct loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development Facilities Program for the addition of a fire service substation in the Rivers Bridge community in an amount not to exceed \$150,000.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, the calendar of events was approved after adding a special called meeting for Monday, June 11, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

Positive and collective comments of gratitude were made concerning the employees and the visitors present. The media had no comments.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Reverend Odom, council motioned to enter in executive session at 9:07 p.m. to review a contract.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Comer, council re-entered in open session to announce no action taken and to adjourn at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC