

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

- April 6, 2015

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*, Bamberg County Library, Bamberg County Website, and a copy posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the County Courthouse.

Bamberg County Council met 6:30 p.m., April 6, 2015, in the courtroom of the Bamberg County Courthouse. **Present:** Chairman Joe Guess, Jr., Councilwoman Alzena Robinson, Councilmen Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Clint Carter, and Rev. Isaiah Odom. **Absent:** Councilman Larry Haynes. **Others Present:** Administrator Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Andre' Anderson, Jerry Bell, Ed Darnell, June Darnell, <Mallory Biering, Robert Corlin, Alice Johnson, Brittnay Barnell, Derek Jeffcoat, Sharon Hammond, Bill Johnson, David Harley, Jerry Halmon, Gina Smith, Ben Hay, Aisha Brabham, Sandy Carter, Theresa Laurey, Amanda Jeffers and Dallas Hibbler.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Joe Guess at 6:30 p.m., in the Bamberg County Courtroom. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Clint Carter, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilwoman Alzena Robinson.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Carter, council approved the minutes from the March 2, 2015 meeting.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the minutes from special called meeting of March 10, 2015.

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Reverend Odom, council approved the agenda as submitted.

Bamberg County Council conducted a public hearing on a proposed ordinance seeking to reaffirm the Six County Region of the Lower Savannah Workforce Investment Area (presently comprised of the Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun and Orangeburg Counties within the state of South Carolina. No comments were made.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council presented a framed proclamation designating April 12 – 18, 2015 as National Telecommunicator's Week in Bamberg County. Emergency Services Director Sharon Hammond, Sheriff Ed Darnell (dispatchers supervisor), and members of council thanked the dispatchers for their dedicated service. Ms. Hammond introduced Addressing Technician/Communications Coordinator Dallas Hibbler, her newly hired staff member.

Kell Anderson, project manager with Southern Carolina Alliance, reported the alliance is working on several projects including one which could bring 137 jobs and a \$9.45 million (Project Cowboy), in capital investments. Mr. Anderson also mentioned Project Green, a \$25

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million capital investment with 28 jobs. He further stated in follow up to a visit last November, SCA met again with Southeastern Fiberglass this month (April). The company reports that business is increasing and they are optimistic for the remainder of 2015. A workforce development meeting with regional Technical Schools, Vocational Schools and major automotive dealership service managers was conducted in March. The purpose was to examine the current and future needs for a pipeline of trained automotive technicians. Items going forward are to continue to examine current Vocational School Curriculum in an effort to better align course work offered with dealership needs. A comprehensive tour of Bamberg County properties with the new Building and Sites manager at the Department of Commerce was conducted in March and additional Commerce staff will be in the area for a visit later in April. The Economic Development Commission selected Robert Chatman of Denmark as the 2015 Economic Ambassador. Mr. Chatman has been a longstanding champion of Economic Development in Bamberg County and will be a welcome addition to Bamberg's distinguished list of Ambassadors. Mr. Anderson announced on April 21, SCA will be taking the delegation to Washington, D.C., and Councilman Larry Hayes will be among those going. The Council thanked Mr. Anderson and accepted his report as information.

Jerry Bell, Executive Director of the Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce, reported on upcoming events, including the Arts Council's event. All were encouraged to visit the Hometown Teams exhibit if they had not, it is scheduled to be stationed in Denmark for four more days. Flyers of the upcoming events were available for all those that were present.

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported that Bamberg County had a total income of \$216,606 for February, with total expenses at \$640,275. Ms. Johnson informed the council that the county has money coming in and bills are being paid out of the general fund and we will have money to reimburse the general fund.

Finance Director Thomas reported the county's general fund had generated \$5,592,506 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of February. The county collected \$689,631 year-to-date in its special revenue fund, which consists of the county's E-911, road maintenance and rural fire service funds. Year-to-date expenditures stood at \$504,821. The county collected \$779,109 year-to-date in the enterprise fund, which consists of solid waste funds. Year-to-date expenditures stood at \$663,932. An assertive effort to collect past due landfill tipping fees, with year-to-date fee collection standing at \$334,817 – representing 93 percent of the annual budget of \$370,000. Last year's collection was \$241,441. Finance Director Thomas said that an increase in fees paid to the Three Rivers Solid Waste Authority is impacting the budget as the tonnage sent to the facility from the county is increasing. Expenditures in this department are being closely monitored.

Controller Smith said she is working on making electronic copies of all the county's leases and agreements. Ms. Smith said she is moving forward with the county's Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), valuation. Bamberg County has entered into an agreement with a vendor out of Texas to come in and do the evaluation at a cost of \$5,500 for a three-year valuation. This has to be done in order for the county to receive a clean audit.

Administrator Preston informed the Council that he is working on a proposal for them to consider regarding the upgrade of the county's rolling stock and heavy equipment. The rolling

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stock includes Sheriff's Department patrol vehicles. Mr. Preston stated that County Treasurer Alice Johnson completed a leadership class for treasurers and noted she was the first treasurer from Bamberg County that completed this class. Also, County Assessor Doretta Elliott and her team has once again been awarded the Best Modifier Award. Newly hired Bamberg County Litter Control Officer David Harley was introduced to council and the public. He is a certified Class #2 Officer and is working on his Class 3 certification. Officer Harley is investigating litter sites and is working with the Keep Bamberg County Beautiful program on equipment and other needs. Presently, the litter hotline is going to be the landfill number (803) 245-3090. KBCB Director Mallory informed the council that over 350 volunteers have picked up more than 9,500 pounds of trash from July 2014 to present.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) Lower Savannah COG -Meeting to be held in Orangeburg this Thursday. LSCOG currently looking for a director.
- 2) SCA -Meeting was held in Hardeeville – meeting was very fruitful.
- 3) LSCOG (TAC) -Project on Hwy. 78 & downtown Denmark originally slated to be completed in 28 days has become a 5 ½ mos. Project. Called Amanda Sievers regarding the project.
- 4) LSCOG Housing Consortium -They have approved 3 owner occupied facilities (Blackville, Allendale and Denmark).

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Reverend Odom, council approved third reading, an ordinance seeking to reaffirm the six county region of the Lower Savannah Workforce Investment Area.

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Reverend Odom, council approved resolution declaring April as Fair Housing Month in Bamberg County.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved a resolution thanking Colleton County for the donation of approximately \$42,400 worth of communications equipment to Bamberg County Fire Service.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved a resolution inviting county citizens to participate in Keep Bamberg County Beautiful Adopt-A-Highway Challenge. This resolution was sponsored by Reverend Odom and Councilman Kinard.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the calendar of events after on request from Reverend Odom, that the June meeting be changed from the 1st to June 2nd. This request was made because Reverend Odom's granddaughter was graduating from medical school and he would just be returning on June 1.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Reverend Odom, approved the appointment of Ms. Clara Thomas (Bamberg County EDC Board), Mr. Curtis Tyler (Bamberg County

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Recreation Committee) and Mr. James Robinson (Denmark City) to the Bamberg County Tourism and Recreation Committee. Next scheduled meeting for the committee is Wednesday, April 15, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.

Councilwoman Robinson stated that she and Councilman Kinard received calls about how dark the area is at the Bamberg Mobile Home Park located on Houser Street (located off Race Street). She further stated that she went to investigate the matter and almost fell into a hole during that visit. Councilwoman Robinson requested Administrator Preston write a letter to the Bamberg Board of Public Works and Bamberg City and ask that they study the possibility of adding street lights at the mobile home park.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, council approved the amending of the agenda by Reverend Odom to approve a resolution expressing opposition to a state legislative proposal to shift the cost of maintaining some state roads to counties.

There were no comments from the public.

Chairman Guess called for comments from the council and news media.

Robinson: Asked that Ms. Janeth Walker be placed on May 4th agenda for approval of appointment to the Bamberg County Recreation Committee.

Carter: Thanked the employees for their hard work.

Kinard: Thanked Administrator Preston for the hard work on the budget. Thanked BCKB Director. Stated they are moving forward with the road at the Baby Bear Daycare – hopefully the road will be straightened out soon.

Comer: If someone is not going to be present at a meeting, someone needs to be informed. Does council always change meetings because of one person.

Odom: Thanked everyone for their work and effort.

Guess: Thanked the employees.

There being no further discussion of business, on motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, council adjourned to enter in executive session to receive legal advice on an economic development matter.

Respectfully submitted by:

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC