

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

- January 4, 2016

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., January 4, 2016, in the courtroom of the Bamberg County Courthouse. **Present:** Chairman Joe Guess, Jr., Councilwoman Alzena Robinson, Councilmen Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Clint Carter, Larry Haynes and Rev. Isaiah Odom. **Others Present:** Administrator Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Phyllis Overstreet, Jerry Halmon, Jerry Bell, Alice Johnson, Gina Smith, and Lynn Maynard.

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 Trent Kinard, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Larry Haynes.

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Reverend Odom, council approved the minutes from the December 7, 2015 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, council approved the agenda as submitted.

Bamberg County Council acknowledged changing of the gavel from outgoing chairman Joe Guess, Jr., to incoming chairman Reverend Isaiah Odom. Reverend Odom will serve as chairman until December 31, 2016.

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved the appointment of Councilman Evert Comer, Jr., as vice chairman as established by means of district rotation and set forth by Bamberg County Council policy. Councilman Comer's term as vice chairman will expire December 31, 2016.

Chairman Odom and council presented a service award to outgoing chairman Joe Guess, Jr., for outstanding service rendered while serving as council.

Jerry Bell, Bamberg County Chamber Director, distributed flyers of upcoming events in Bamberg County and encouraged those present to support them. Mr. Bell reminded everyone if they have community announcements to be advertised, please forward them to him and they would be placed in the flyer for public viewing. New chamber hours were announced as being Monday – Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported the county had income from taxes of \$1,243,367 less transfer checks of \$949,769 leaving the county with a balance from taxes of

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\$238,500. The county also had a property tax rollback of \$600,000 and other payments which left the county with a negative balance of \$293,209.34. Treasurer Johnson noted that the 2015 negative balance was a \$140,000 improvement over the 2014 negative balance which was \$433,826.85.

Finance Director Thomas reported the county's actual revenue collected through November is \$1,899,363 which represents 29% of the budgeted amount. The general fund has collectively spent 33% of the budget at \$2,162,727 year-to-date. All county departments are operating within their budgeted amount.

Administrator Preston reported that the courthouse annex is going as scheduled we are under budget on the building and anticipate moving offices into the annex in April or May 2016. Administrator Preston said we received a tree grant for the amount of \$5,000. We have received a total of almost \$20,000 in grant funds from the state since July for litter prevention and beautification efforts. Mr. Preston gave an update on the C fund projects in the county. These funds are used for improvements paid for through gasoline tax collections. The approved projects total more than \$1 million and include \$200,000 for the parking lot and surrounding road area for the courthouse annex as well as paving the courthouse loop.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) Lower Savannah COG -Bamberg County received a plaque for their board members having attended the most meeting for the year.
 - 2) LSCOG (TAC) (Kinard) -Everything is still on track. Felder will get some maintenance to it; Denmark project still moving along; Bi-Lo/Calhoun project – there is a TAC meeting scheduled in St. Matthews; C Fund meeting scheduled for next week; Road in Councilman Haynes' district (Crouch Circle) get this road approved for \$440,000 (Councilman Haynes had signed letters by the residents sent to Senator Hutto and Rep. Bamberg); On the list for repairs (Sunnybrook, Gum Tree, Crouch Circle, Bob Cat Landing); and new parking lot around the courthouse.
 - Councilwoman Robinson asked that they take a look at Croft, Easy and Snake Streets.
 - Councilman Comer asked that they take a look at Dally Road in Denmark.
 - Councilman Kinard said that they also need to look at Thankful Cemetery Road – Bamberg.
 - 3) LSCOG Housing Consortium -No meeting...scheduled for later this month.
 - 4) SCA - Everything is moving in the right direction and hope to have a report on the Promise Zone soon.
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On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Carter, council approved on second reading, in title only, proposed ordinance authorizing (1) execution and delivery of a fee in lieu of tax incentive agreement between Bamberg County, South Carolina (“County”) and Project Fatback (“Company”) in connection with the establishment of a certain facility in the county (“Project”); (2) the county to covenant in such agreement to accept certain negotiated fees in lieu of ad valorem taxes with respect to the project (“FILOT Payment”); (3) the company to claim certain special source credits against such FILOT Payments; (4) the benefits of a multi-county park to be made available to the company and the project; and (5) other matters relating thereto. An announcement is scheduled to be made by next week (company name, etc.).

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, council approved a resolution establishing written public notice of the Bamberg County Council Meeting Schedule for calendar year 2016.

Council had a brief discussion trying to determine a suitable date for the 2016 Bamberg County Council Retreat. The date agreed on was Friday, February 26, 2016, beginning at 9:00 a.m., location to be determined.

Chairman Odom called for public comments. Comments were made by Mr. Lynn Maynard of the Midway community. Mr. Maynard asked if the county could do something with the limbs that are piled up along the dirt portion of Railroad Avenue. It was agreed that this request will be researched.

Chairman Odom called for comments from the council members.

- Robinson : Due to a lot of discussion as how applicants were funded through the Recreation Committee, a meeting has been set to meet with the committees and others as it relates to future funding.
- Haynes : Thanked the administrator and staff for all that they do.
- Carter : Thanked everyone for their service. Thanked Dana Wilson for donating the old Cheese & Cracker Box (*located at 1162 North St.*)
- Kinard : Thanked the employees for their hard work and thanked Councilman Haynes for pursuing the road issue (Crouch Circle) for the citizens.
- Guess : Thanked the county employees and council for giving their support during his tenure as chairman with a minimal amount of strife.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd CCC