

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*, 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.

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In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bamberg County Council met 6:00 p.m., June 30, 2021 in several locations within the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex and some participated by way of teleconference. The public joined the meeting by various means of technology. **Present:** Chairman Larry Haynes, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Spencer Donaldson, Phil Myers, Jr., Clint Carter and Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Adam Ness, Alice Johnson, Gina Smith, Chip Maier, Dionne Gleaton, Mark Tyler, Dianne Black, Summer Johnson, Sue Weiler Greenberg, Kay Maxwell, Farrell Pulaski, Jannie Johnson, Candace Fralix, Sarah G. Noel, Walt Inabinet, Bill Johnson, Ruthie Brown, Michael Chassereau and two additional callers.

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Bamberg County Council Virtual meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Haynes at 6:00 p.m. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Evert Comer, Jr., followed with the pledge of allegiance led by Councilman Spencer Donaldson.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the agenda as submitted.

**-Order of Business-**

At this time, Chairman Haynes addressed the public hearing section by reading the following for public comments: An ordinance to adopt the operating and capital budgets of Bamberg County for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022, and to make appropriations for such Bamberg County Budgets for county ordinary purposes for which the county may levy a tax; to provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real estate properties in Bamberg County of such county 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. Chairman Haynes asked if there were any comments from the public. No comments from the public had been received. Administrator Preston read into the record, a letter received from SouthernCarolina Alliance President Danny Black, concerning the passing of the Bamberg County FY 2021-2022 budget. Letters from Mayor Nancy Foster – Bamberg; Mayor Gerald Wright – Denmark and Mayor Wilma Edmonds – Govan had been previously presented for consideration during the budget process. (*Letters attached to the Minutes*).

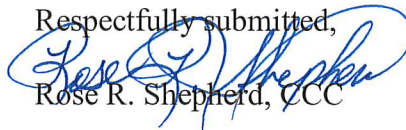
On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the second round of recreation grants for seven programs that applied after the initial target date. Programs to receive funds are: Bamberg Youth Baseball (6and under - \$700); Bamberg Youth Baseball (7-8 - \$1,000); Bamberg Youth Baseball (9-10 - \$700); Bamberg Youth Baseball (11-12 - \$700); Bamberg Youth Softball (7-9 - \$700); Bamberg Youth Softball (10-12 - \$700); Bamberg Youth Baseball (13-14 - \$1,000). Total funds paid out to the recreation program for this fiscal year was \$11,209.50. Administrator Preston said the balance (\$2,790.50) will be carried forward into the next fiscal year to be reallocated in the next budget.

Chairman Haynes read: An ordinance to adopt the operating and capital budgets of Bamberg County for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022, and to make appropriations for such Bamberg County Budgets for county ordinary purposes for which the county may levy a tax; to provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real estate properties in Bamberg County of such county 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 – Council, third reading. On motion by Councilman Donaldson, seconded by Councilman Myers, council approved to enter in discussion of the FY 2021-2022 budget ordinance totaling \$27.5 million. Councilman Carter said that he had been trying to make a motion to continue with last year’s budget and that no new employees be added. Also, calling for no new raises except for employees who didn’t receive a raise last year. Administrator Preston answered that the agenda would have had to be amended at the beginning of the meeting in order to be included. Councilman Carter and Councilwoman Hammond raised several concerns such as: not receiving additional documentation regarding budget, itemized list of personnel without salaries grouped together, etc. Referencing the budget, Controller Gina Smith conveyed the fact that there are other revenue sources in the budget that we know are coming. Bamberg County has already received some of the funds in May from the Biden-Harris American Rescue Plan funds. Also, we will receive the other half of those funds in May of 2022. Some of those funds are included in this budget that’s presented. Councilwoman Hammond asked that council be included in how those funds are spent. County Attorney Richard Ness informed Council that they had to pass the budget to be in compliance with state law. At the direction of Attorney Richard Ness, he had Attorney Adam Ness read a letter from Cydney Milling, the state’s assistant attorney general. Ms. Milling declared in her letter that state law requires the county to adopt a budget before the start of the fiscal year July 1 and if the county failed to do so, it may be prohibited from expending county funds until it adopts a budget. Administrator Preston reiterated that the counties that have passed a resolution in the past had a problem that they did not have a balanced budget. We have a balanced budget before the council. The budget has received two readings and if anyone is doing it, according to legal analysis, it’s illegal. After additional discussion, Chairman Haynes called for the vote. Those voting in favor of the budget were: Councilmen Comer – District 6; Donaldson – District 4; Goodman – District 5 and Chairman Haynes – District 3. Those voting not in favor of the budget were: Councilwoman Hammond – District 2; Councilmen Myers – District 1 and Carter – District 7. The budget passed with no tax increase.

At this time Chairman Haynes called for a motion to adjournment. On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rose R. Shepherd", is written over the typed name.

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC



201 Lee Avenue  
Hampton, SC 29924  
803-541-0023  
[www.southerncarolina.org](http://www.southerncarolina.org)  
[sca@southerncarolina.org](mailto:sca@southerncarolina.org)

June 24, 2021

Dear Members of Bamberg County Council:

As President of Southern Carolina Alliance, I respectfully request and urge you to pass the Bamberg County budget in a timely manner by June 30<sup>th</sup> to comply with state law.

As a former county councilman and chairman of Barnwell County, I understand the pressure that councilmen receive from many points of view in the community in making decisions that impact everyone in your county.

For the last 25 years, I have worked closely with every elected county councilman and councilwoman to market Bamberg County to new industries and to encourage our existing industries to expand, increasing their investment in the community and creating new jobs.

We know how challenging this task is for a rural county, which must compete globally.

From an economic development perspective, I am very concerned that if the county council does not comply with state law, bringing county operations to a halt, that it will send a message of instability to companies considering Bamberg County.

As the members of council are aware, there are several projects currently considering Bamberg County, and one of them, Project Barndoor, is scheduled to be announced on July 19.

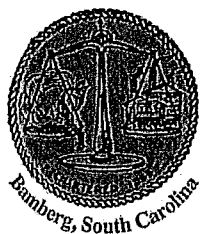
It is imperative that Bamberg County government is working, incentives are finalized, and projects are completed on time, assuring businesses that they can count on Bamberg County as a good place to invest and conduct business. Businesses, like families, need certainty and reliability from their county services.

As your nonprofit economic development organization, we are committed at SCA to marketing Bamberg County in the most effective and advantageous way to attract investment and jobs, and that is our only objective in requesting that you pass the county budget on time, making any necessary amendments that you find appropriate in the new fiscal year.

As always, we are proud to be your partners for economic development in Bamberg County. If I may assist you in any way, please feel free to call me directly at (803)541-1558.

Respectfully submitted with my kindest regards,

Danny Black  
President and CEO



# City of Bamberg

Nancy R. Foster  
Mayor

2340 Main Highway  
P.O. Box 300  
Phone: 803-245-5128  
Fax: 803-245-5156  
Bamberg, South Carolina 29003

Robin C. Chavis  
Clerk/Treasurer

Rosetta Draper  
Fire Commissioner

Willie Staley  
Police Commissioner

Leslie Hayes  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Licensing and Chamber of  
Commerce Commissioner

Kenneth Ahlin  
Franchises and Economic  
Development Commissioner

Bobbi Bunch  
Sanitation Commissioner

Kimberly Compton  
Public Buildings, Parks and  
Insurance Commissioner

June 23, 2021

Dear Honorable County Council Members,

I am trying to understand why you all are not passing the Bamberg County Budget. County Council has had all year to understand, or gain knowledge about the County operations and expenditures. Go see your Administrator! Please find out what is going on!

Not passing a budget affects more than just the County. It affects the municipalities as well. We share many cost saving operations for the City and the County. To name a few...agreement with Sheriff's Department, jail facilities, Fire Department, tax collection, magistrate, building inspections, grant opportunities, etc. Not passing a County budget could have dire consequences to our citizens.

A budget documents expenses and income. A budget is created so that your expenses do not exceed your income. The county has to live within the adopted budget.

During the development of the budget, information from the current year and previous years are used; current revenues and expenditure, cash flow, debt service commitments, financial reports and capital plans. The County has to comply with Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) regulations and meet State Board of Accounts standards.

The County is audited every year...Bamberg County has received clean, unmodified audits which is the best opinion a County can receive.

Without a comprehensive understanding of governmental accounting and an in-depth knowledge of the county, the annual budget process can be confusing and complex.

Each department of county government has a line-item budget to track every dollar spent on personnel, supplies, operating and equipment costs. The County has an operating budget and a capital budget. An operating budget is a plan of current spending and the means to pay for it (taxes, fees, grants, etc.). A capital budget contains long-term spending objectives and acquisition of assets along with the means to pay for them including, borrowing and/or bonding.

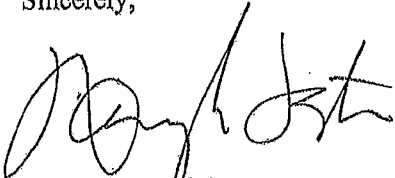
The annual operating budget serves as the County's most significant policy document and operating plan. As County officials, I understand that you must be sure that the decisions you make financially are going to continue to help the County be sustainable for many years to come. But get with your Administrator, all year long, before budget time to understand what is going on.

Please do all you can to make this budget work and pass it. The City of Bamberg and Bamberg County share many services; saving the County and the City many tax dollars.

God bless you for all you do. It is not easy being an elected official, but we have been elected and must do our very best to make our County and cities the best they can be.

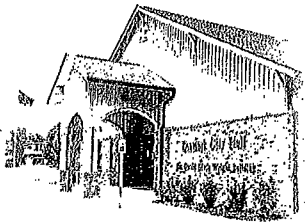
With warm regards, I remain,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nancy Foster', written in a cursive style.

Nancy Foster Mayor

# The City of Denmark



Mayor  
**Dr. Gerald E. Wright**

Mayor Pro Tem  
**Jake N. Bookard**

Council Members  
**Bervay L. Carter**  
**Bonnie Love**  
**Hope Long Weldon**  
**Rosa R. James**  
**Calvin Odom**

June 22, 2021

To: Members of Bamberg County Council

I am writing to encourage and request that you pass the county's budget. Issues that may tempt you to not pass your budget can be resolved by other means. Passage of a budget may be critical to maintaining a good credit rating.

I implore you to consider other measures to address whatever concerns you have. Please allow the other governmental entities and functions that are dependent upon county finances to operate as they normally would with an approved county budget.

We rely upon county council to represent the best interest of all segments and components in the county. I sincerely believe this is achieved easier and more efficiently with basic operations and positions funded continuously.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter and your service to our county.

Respectfully,  
Gerald E. Wright





## TOWN OF GOVAN

Wilma Edmonds, Mayor

20920 Ehrhardt Road, Olar, SC 29843

Govan Town Council  
Mayor Wilma Edmonds  
Councilwoman Willie Mae Daniels  
Councilwoman Elizabeth Michelle Banks  
Councilman Edgar Banks  
Councilman Erone Edmonds

June 22, 2021

Honorable Bamberg County Council Members  
1234 North Street  
Bamberg, SC 29003

Dear Honorable Bamberg County Council Members:

The purpose of this letter is to urge you to pass the budget for the next fiscal year for Bamberg County. I have been advised that in a special called meeting on Monday, June 21, 2021, the county council failed by a vote of 5-2 to pass the second reading of the budget. It is my understanding that an ultimate failure of Bamberg County Council to timely pass the budget will have far reaching dire consequences that would not only negatively impact the county but every municipality. I am told that the county would not be able to pay employees, our indebtedness, have extreme difficulty in new indebtedness, be subjected to undue State interference into the business of the county, and much, more. The county would basically be shut down.

I urge you to work together and get the budget passed for the upcoming new year. I understand that it is a balanced budget with no need for a tax increase.

I am praying and wishing for the best for Bamberg County. Hope you are too.

Sincerely,

Wilma L. Edmonds