

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

- August 13, 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., August 13, 2018 in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Clint Carter, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Isaiah Odom, Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr. and Larry Haynes. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Dionne Gleaton, Gina Smith, Alice Johnson, Kay Maxwell, Tracy Lanners, Sarah Noel, Mary Tilton, Ruthie Brown, Ed Darnell, Jerry Johnson, John Johnson, Matthew Johnson, Bill Johnson, Doretta Elliott, Mary Louise Smith, Smith family members, Jerry Bell, Rufus Jamison, Janeth Walker, Beverly Boneparte, Mary Rozier and Scarlet Johnson.

---

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Clint Carter at 6:30 p.m., in the Chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Evert Comer, Jr, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Joseph Guess, Jr.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved the minutes from the July 2, 2018 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the agenda after rearranging two public presentation items.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved and ratified a resolution recognizing the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and service of Bamberg County resident Mary Lucille Smith. Ms. Smith began volunteering at the Cheese and Cracker Box in 1989 and continued her volunteer work for twenty-eight years until her second retirement in 2017 at age 99. In addition with her many family members being present, Ms. Smith was presented with a framed resolution. During her comments, encouraging statements were made and all were told that the volunteering and work did more for her than she did for it. The council congratulated and praised Ms. Smith

Probate Judge Sarah Noel introduced Tracy Lanners, Region -A supervisor in the state Department of Mental Health's Office of Community Crisis Response and Intervention. Ms. Lanners will be part of the department's expanding CCRI program, with the intent to address service gaps, in particular to responding to people suffering from a mental health crisis. Judge Noel said it was a program that would hopefully streamline the process through which mentally ill individuals are provided services and not have them immediately transferred to a hospital facility. There is an effort to evade the emergency room and have those individuals transported directly to a mental health bed somewhere in South Carolina. Under the program, a 1-800 number can be called by a family member, law enforcement, a patient or EMS seeking help with someone in crisis. The call will then be triaged by a clinician on the phone, and a determination is made if an onsite response is needed. If an onsite response is needed, a team of two master's-level clinicians will respond, along with law enforcement, to assess the patient and determine the needed level of care.

August 13, 2018....continued

Matthew Johnson, Bamberg County Public Works employee, was selected as the County Employee of the Quarter. Mr. Johnson was honored and presented with a gift card and a certificate of recognition. Congratulations to Matthew for being that shining light for our citizens and fellow employees.

A public hearing was given to an ordinance amending Bamberg County Ordinance #1-13-8, dated December 2, 2013, as codified, in certain limited regards and particulars only, pertaining to the appointment and composition of the advisory board of the Keep America Beautiful of Bamberg County; and other matters related thereto. No comments were made from the public.

Also, a public hearing was given to an ordinance for transfer of easement to Palmetto Telephone for fiber-optic cable installation. No one shared comments during this time.

Kay Maxwell, Southern Carolina Alliance vice president of marketing, reported that the properties in our region have been submitted 155 times on various RFIs and inquires and Bamberg County is among the areas where properties are being considered. Fifty-seven of the aforementioned projects are still active. Nineteen of those active projects are considering Bamberg County properties. The installation of a partial floor at the spec building in the CrossRhodes Industrial Park is complete. There is now a website in place and a Bamberg economic development website, but a region emergency center website must be put together so that people can go online and look for updates.

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. Mr. Bell announced that the following individuals have been nominated for the Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce's Waddy Thompson Citizen of the Year: state Representative Justin Bamberg; Frances Johnson; Ted Brant and Cindy Hurst. The Chamber Banquet will be the first Thursday in November. The update was accepted as information.

Treasurer Alice Johnson reported that the county's total income in June was \$672,624, with expenditures coming in at \$824,199, leaving a negative balance of \$151,575.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas financial was not provided because the finance department had not yet made its yearend adjusting journal entries. Controller Smith reported on budget challenges the county is facing with health insurance and retirement contributions, along with a shortfall in local government funding. Normally our monthly health insurance runs about \$50,000. Now it runs between \$72,000 and \$74,000 a month. Bamberg County has received \$2,168,130 in local government allocations than we should have.

Administrator Preston reported that Bamberg, Barnwell, Orangeburg and Calhoun counties were presented the 2018 Barrett Lawrimore Regional Cooperation award for their work on the Bamberg-Barnwell Regional Freestanding Emergency Center in Denmark. Representatives from USDA will be in the county to complete the signing of documents regarding the 3 fire trucks. We will need to set up a schedule for four council members to come in at alternate times to sign the documents. Solicited bids are scheduled to be in on September 7 for consideration of a solid waste contract. The Veteran's Memorial is now under construction. August 19<sup>th</sup> will begin Aviation Week.

August 13, 2018....continued

**REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL**

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) -No report.
  - 2) LSCOG -Meeting was held last Thursday in Allendale.
  - 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) -TAC meeting is scheduled for 8/21 in Aiken at LSCOG 9:00 a.m. Lunch will be served.
  - 3) LSCOG Housing Consortium - No report.
- 

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilman Haynes and Councilman Comer, council approved a resolution inducing and identifying a proposed investment under code name of “Project Blackberry” and other matters related thereto.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved on third reading, an ordinance for transfer of easement to Palmetto Telephone for fiber optic cable.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilmen Haynes, council approved third reading of an ordinance amending Bamberg County Ordinance #1-13-8, dated December 2, 2013, as codified, in certain limited regards and particulars only, pertaining to the appointment and composition of the advisory board of the Keep America Beautiful of Bamberg County; and other matters related thereto.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Reverend Odom and Councilwoman Haynes, council gave first reading in title only to a proposed ordinance to enlarge a joining industrial park among Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell and Hampton counties to include a solar farm owned by Southern Current LLC (Project Blackberry).

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Reverend Odom and Councilwoman Hammond, council gave first reading in title only to an ordinance authorizing a fee-in-lieu agreement between the county and the solar panel project, along with special source revenue credits.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Haynes, the calendar of events was discussed and approved.

Brief comments were made by Rev. Rufus Jamison regarding his opinion of high taxes.

Council made various comments and the new media had no additional questions.

There being no further business to be discussed, on motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council agreed and the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC