

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*, 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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Bamberg County Council met 6:30 p.m., July 1, 2019 in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard, Reverend Isaiah Odom. Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., and Larry Haynes. Absent: Councilmen Joe Guess, Jr., and Clint Carter. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Jerry Halmon, Dionne Gleaton, Ruthie Brown, Miriam Beard, Dean Fralix, Rufus Jamison, Brad Hudson, Deanna Bery Al Jenkins, Gerald Wright, Jerry Bell, Kay Maxwell, Detra Bruce, Jeanette Driggers, Bobbi Bunch, John Gleaton, Charles Breland, Rosa Verner, Dorothy Williams, Clair Hall and approximately 10 additional people.

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Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Kerry 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 Councilwoman Sharon Hammond.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the minutes from the June 3<sup>rd</sup>, June 18<sup>th</sup>, and June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meetings with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the agenda after moving public comments at the beginning of the agenda instead of at the end.

At this time, Chairman Kinard opened the floor for public comments. Five citizens signed in at the beginning of the meeting to make public comments. They were: Miriam Beard, Dean Fralix, Brad Hudson, Rev. Rufus Jamison and Deanna Berry. These citizens had various concerns about issues within Bamberg County. Some comments were regarding the following: formation of a citizens liaison group; clarification as to where the county is being lead; clarification of the \$30 road fee; unresolved issues of the water status in Denmark, availability of distribution of the newly passed FY 2019-2020 budget for Bamberg County and additional comments were made by citizens in the audience.

Dr. Gerald Wright, Denmark Mayor, gave a presentation regarding the status of the Denmark City water and made a request on behalf of the City, for the ownership of the water tower located on U.S. Highway 78 between Bamberg and Denmark. Mayor Wright wanted it to be known that there is not a water crisis in Denmark. He continued by saying, "The distribution system is in good shape, they recently released the annual report on the water quality and copies are available to as many of you as you wish." Presently, the tank is in need of being repaired and upgraded. The water tank gives them the assurance that they would have suitable pressure for their distribution area. Councilwoman Hammond asked how long it would take the city to make the water tower a part of its infrastructure. Mayor Wright responded that they are in the process of developing a grant proposal and it would be more favorable to secure grant funding with ownership of the water tank than it would be if they were just using the tank. A favorable response on the request for ownership of the water tower is being sort. After the presentation, Chairman Kinard said, "We'll take that under advisement and Administrator Preston will get back with you."

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Accepted as information was a quarterly report on economic development from Kay Maxwell, vice president of marketing at SouthernCarolina Alliance. Ms. Maxwell began by announcing that Darrell Booker, Senior Project Manager, has taken a new position closer to his home in Columbia and Bamberg County meetings will be covered by her and other SCA staff members until someone else is hired. The internal marketing and branding campaign partnered with the state Department of Commerce for Bamberg County has started. A map meeting (focus group meeting), was held by Alison South Consultants, and that was to get participation from citizens across the county. Good ideas were generated from the group. As a part of the campaign, a promotional segment is being done on the growth at Freudenberg. Stories are being done on Blackwater Barrels, LLC, regarding the business as a Bourbon barrel maker in Bamberg County. Also, they are doing a story on the new emergency room center and a special news channel is being created for SCA to share Bamberg County news. The SCA is a regional development group serving seven counties. Those counties contain areas designated as federal Opportunity Zones, which are able to give tax incentives to encourage long-term private investment in low-income communities. The Opportunity Zones are now being accessed in all of the seven counties and looking at the best areas of Bamberg County and how they would best be utilized, and then trying to help work with this group to identify Opportunity Fund investors that would utilize this tax credit and invest in our community, whether it be in manufacturing operations, housing or other types of community development funding. Ms. Maxwell's report was accepted as information.

Former Bamberg County Chamber President Jerry Bell, informed the Council that Ms. Carol Durgan was no longer with the Chamber because of health reasons. He will be filling in until a replacement is hired. All were updated on the upcoming events within the county, flyers were distributed and the citizens were urged to attend.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund had \$7,902,805 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of May, leaving a positive balance of \$6,405,504. All departments are continuing to operate within their budgets.

Administrator Joey Preston updated council that the county will be receiving new voting equipment and it should be delivered toward the end of July. We still have the old equipment and we have a limited storage area and this creates a problem. With having Homeland Security requirements on the protection and security of all this equipment this will probably require some expense from the county to get a secure site.

### **REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL**

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) -Reported that the bridge located between Barnwell and Denmark should be opened sometimes in July 2019.
- 2) LSCOG -Meeting scheduled for August 1, 2019.
- 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) -Meeting schedule for July 16, 2019 in Orangeburg.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilmen Haynes and Comer, council approved second reading to a proposed ordinance authorizing (1) the execution and delivery of an infrastructure credit agreement by and between Bamberg County, South Carolina and a company known to the county as "Project Pegasus" and one or more existing or to-be-formed or acquired subsidiaries, or affiliated or related entities, to provide for certain special source revenue credits for the benefit of a project that Project Pegasus may pursue in the county; (2) the inclusion of said project in a multi-county business or industrial park; and (3) other related matters.

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On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Haynes, the calendar of events was approved as submitted.

Chairman Kinard called for comments from the Council. Council thanked the public for coming and invited their attendance at all meetings. Everyone was wished a happy and safe 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Councilman Odom asked that we continue to work for the betterment of Bamberg County. He congratulated Administrator Preston as being one of the two best administrators that has worked for Bamberg County during his thirty plus years tenure as a councilman.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Reverend Odom, council agreed to enter in executive session to discuss a legal matter.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Odom, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC