

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING - October 1, 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., October 1, 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, Jerry Halmon, Gina Smith, Wallace Hicks, Alice Johnson, Mary Tilton, Ruthie Brown, Detra' Bruce, Danny Singleton, Bill Johnson, Cindy Hurst, William Molnar, Candace Fralix, Jessica Watt, Betty Singleton, Jannie Johnson, Ed Darnell, Ed Darnell, Frances Johnson, Pedie Hiers, Ben Hay, Rochelle Harvey, Lealer Jackson and Sarah Noel.

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 Reverend Isaiah Odom, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Joe Guess, Jr.

On motion by Councilman Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the minutes from the September 10, 2018 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

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

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved a proclamation designating the week of October 15-19 as Telehealth Awareness Week in Bamberg County.

On motion by Rev. Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council ratified a resolution acknowledging and thanking Calvin Wright, executive director of the Orangeburg-Calhoun-Allendale-Bamberg Community Action Agency, Incorporated for his over fifty years of service to the county, local region and the agency.

A public hearing was given to a proposed ordinance to amend the agreement for a joint industrial park shared by Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell and Hampton counties and other matters related thereto project Blackberry. The audience had no public comments regarding this ordinance. Also, on motion by Rev. Odom, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved third reading of this ordinance.

An additional public hearing was given to an ordinance to authorizing a fee-in-lieu-of-taxes agreement between the county and the solar panel project, along with special source revenue credits. No public comments were made. On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Rev. Odom, council approved third reading of this ordinance.

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Senior Project Manager of SCRDA Darrell Booker, reported Bamberg County is being considered for 12 possible economic development projects. Eight of the prospects have already visited the county. Favorable Projects for the county include Project Golden, a \$5 million investment anticipated to bring over 140 jobs, and Project Vajra, with a job count of 30. Project Golden is an Indian bakery. Also, Project Vajra, is also an Indian company, they produce automotive gaskets. To provide warehouse space and to accommodate Freudenberg's new product line, 20,000 square feet of six-inch concrete flooring has been installed at the CrossRhodes spec building.

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 reminded everyone of the Bamberg County Chamber Banquet to be held the first Thursday in November. Mr. Bell announced an October 8 deadline for the receipt of applications and resumes for interested persons to serve as assistant director of the Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce. The update was accepted as information.

Treasurer Alice Johnson reported that the county's total income in August was \$175,430, with expenditures coming in at \$724,140, leaving a negative balance of \$548,710.

Controller Gina Smith reported on the rising cost of health insurance and retirement payments for the employees. In 2017 the county paid \$629,532, compared to \$727,319 paid in 2018. The increase in insurance would explain the increase of \$103,375 given in Treasurer Johnson's report.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund had \$889,952 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of August. Expenditures stood at \$994,789, leaving a balance of \$104,837. All departments are continuing to operate within their budgets.

Administrator Preston reported that the Airport meeting is scheduled for 3 p.m., on October 9th at the Civic Center. During this time, Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter and Sen. Brad Hutto will tour the airport and the buildings and dinner will be served back at the Civic Center at 6 p.m. Three pumper tankers are due to be delivered to the county in March 2019. The closing documents were signed for the new firetrucks last week. The budget workshop will be held on Tuesday, October 15th at 5 p.m. The C-Fund committee is trying to schedule a meeting for Monday, October 29th and the Planning Commission will have their meeting on Tuesday, October 30. Only one proposal was received for the solid waste contract (Waste Management).

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) -Meeting is scheduled to be held on Columbia on tomorrow.
- 2) LSCOG -Meeting is scheduled for next week in Santee.
is scheduled for the 2nd Thursday in October.

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- 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) -Next meeting is scheduled to be held in Bamberg 11/13 in and Council Chambers.
 - 4) LSCOG Housing Consortium - The committee approved the community action plan by an email vote. The program is ready to be implemented next year.
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On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Rev. Odom, council approved a proposed resolution recognizing October 2018 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This resolution was sponsored by Councilwoman Sharon Hammond.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Rev. Odom, council gave approval to a proposed resolution recognizing October 2018 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This resolution was also sponsored by Councilwoman Sharon Hammond.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Rev. Odom, council discussed and approved the calendar of events as submitted.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Rev. Odom, the following individuals were appointed to the Bamberg County Planning Commission: Douglas Stokes, District 2; Robert Hurst, District 4; James Weldon, District 5 and Wallace Randolph Hicks, Jr., District 6.

At this time, Chairman Carter called for public comments. Ms. Lealer Jackson, a resident of Crouch Circle, questioned the loose rocks and flying dust that is making a mess from the residue left on vehicles and porches and inside of the homes. After the discussion, it was agreed that they would have the contractor take a look at the road condition to see if there is anything that could be done to lessen the situation. Ms. Candace Fralix, a Bamberg County employee, approached the council regarding budgetary conditions of the county, indicating excessive spending and there should be somewhere to cut, etc. Councilman Kinard replied that everybody's got a problem, but nobody's got a solution. He further said, "You want the county to be better, but what have you done to make it better?" Citizens were reminded of the unfunded state mandates and items beyond their control that dictated a tax increase. Councilman Guess stated that the bulk of the increases that we had this year was because of the increases in health insurance and retirement for the employees. Several additional comments were made in reference to the tax increase and council again reminded that they agreed to absorb the complete increase for health insurance and retirement for the employees.

Chairman Carter called for news media comments, none were given.

There being no further business to be discussed, on motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Guess, council agreed and the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC