

**MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING - December 1, 2014**

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.

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Bamberg County Council met 5:30 p.m., December 1, 2014, in the courtroom of the Bamberg County Courthouse. **Present:** Chairman Larry Haynes, Councilwoman Alzena Robinson, Councilmen Joe Guess, Jr., Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Clint Carter, and Rev. Isaiah Odom. **Others Present:** Administrator Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Jerry Halmon, Alice Johnson, Ruthie Brown, Sarah G. Noel, Martha Guess, Kell Anderson, Jerry Bell, Mallory Hoffman, Valerie Fraizer and Shelli Quenga.

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Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Haynes at 5:30 p.m., in the Bamberg County Courtroom. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Joe Guess, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Trent Kinard.

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported that Bamberg County's total income for October was \$500,231. Expenses came in at \$712,205, reflecting a deficit of \$211,975.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved the minutes from the November 10, 2014 meeting with corrections made by Councilman Guess and Councilwoman Robinson.

On motion by Councilman Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the agenda after adding a presentation to the Denmark-Olar High School Cheerleaders from PalmettoPride.

Mallory Hoffman, Keep America Beautiful coordinator, thanked the Denmark-Olar High School cheerleaders for participating in a recent litter-free football game at their school. On behalf of the PalmettoPride project, Chairman Larry Haynes presented the cheerleaders with a check for the amount of \$250.00 from PalmettoPride. The council thanked the cheerleaders for their appearance at the meeting.

Council received a report from Shelli D. Quenga, director of Palmetto Project (*Putting new ideas to work in South Carolina*), a nonprofit organization that received a federal grant to train and place certified navigators to help people explore their health care options under the federal Affordable Care Act. Valerie Frazier, a certified navigator, will be based at the Bamberg County Library from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Mondays through February 15, 2015 to help anyone needing health care assistance. To set up an appointment, call 888-998-4646.

Public hearing was given to a proposed ordinance to exchange real estate located at 392 Second Street for real estate located at 1244 North Street. Attorney Richard Ness explained the procedure to be followed. No public comments were made.

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A public hearing was given to a proposed ordinance for the sale and complete removal from the real estate of the structures presently located at 1244 North Street, 401 Second Street, and 19 Courthouse Loop. Attorney Richard Ness explained that this property was condemned by the County. No public comments were made.

Kell Anderson, project manager with Southern Carolina Alliance gave a brief update to council. Project Thunderball represents an expansion of an existing industry to accommodate a new product line. SCA is in discussions with company officials, to-date no decisions have been made. A grant was applied for through Edisto Electric for the CrossRhodes Building Project and they expect to receive results in late December. The next scheduled board meeting for SCA is December 9, 2014.

Finance Director Thomas reported the county's general fund generated \$1,743,421 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of October. Expenditures stood at \$1,825,297, reflecting a deficit of \$81,876. The county collected \$264,291 year-to-date in special revenue fund, which consists of the county's E-911, road maintenance and rural service fire funds. Year-to-date expenditures stood at \$249,756. The county collected \$224,676 year-to-date in its enterprise fund, which consists of solid waste funds. Year-to-date expenditures stood at \$365,359, reflecting a deficit of \$140,682 in the enterprise fund.

Administrator Preston reported that Brunson Construction Company out of Hampton County, was awarded the \$2,729,300 bid to complete construction of the new complex with work to begin January 2015. A pre-construction conference will be held within the next two weeks. The county is working with South Carolina Regional Housing Authority No. 3 to secure a portion of a \$6.7 million in Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP) funds (these funds are available to the Pee Dee and Sandhills region, including Bamberg County). NIP is designed to stabilize property values by removing and "greening" vacant and abandoned properties in targeted areas, with funding strategically targeting residential demolition in designated areas. Once property is revamped, it goes back on the tax books and is cleaned up or can be converted to parks or whatever. The money will help pay for title searches, pay delinquent taxes that are owed on a pproperty, all the legal expenses that are associated with it. Administrator Preston further stated that every seven to ten years the county have to fly the county to do an aerial. This year we have gotten permission to delay that service until 2016. The council was reminded of a meeting to be held with the Forfeited Land Commission on Tuesday, December 9, in the conference room at the Bamberg County Library.

#### **REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL**

- 1) Lower Savannah COG -
  - 2) SCA -Christmas Dinner in Colleton County.
  - 3) Three Rivers -Meeting on Wednesday, December 10 @ 6:00 p.m.
  - 4) LSCOG (TAC) -Roadwork on Felder Street in Bamberg is slated to be completed in 2 to 3 weeks following a rupture of a 10" water main. U.S. Highway 78 project due for completion mid-December.
  - 5) LSCOG Housing Consortium -Two projects (1 in Orangeburg and 1 in Aiken) both were about \$45,000 and both were approved by e-vote.
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On motion by Councilman Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved third reading of a proposed ordinance to exchange real estate located at 392 Second Street for real estate located at 1244 North Street.

On motion by Councilman Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved third reading of a proposed ordinance for the sale and complete removal from the real estate of the structures presently located at 1244 North Street, 401 Second Street and 19 Courthouse Loop.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Odom, council approved the calendar of events after adding the several items to the calendar.

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the ratification of plans for the Bamberg County Airport. These plans were submitted to the state Aeronautics Commission and state Budget and Control Board. Plans include 1) Capital Improvement Plan; 2) 2015 Pre-Application for FAA Fund (\$166,667 amount of grant that would provide for land acquisition and obstruction clearing at the airport); and 3) 2016 Pre-Application for FAA Fund (\$495,000 amount of grant that would provide for airport amenities, including an automated weather observation system and identifier lights for the end of the runway).

**Comments from Council**

- Councilperson Robinson : 1) Thanked the Administrator for a good year. Stating we all team players. We may disagree, but at the end we do what's right for the betterment of Bamberg County.
- Councilman Guess : Agreed with Councilperson Robinson's comments and thanked the staff for their work.
- Councilman Carter : Thanked the contracted administrator for his service and the employees.
- Councilman Kinard : Appreciate the employees. Visited the Capital with the Office on Aging to see Lt. Gov. Yancy McGill. Some of the clients had never been to the Capital. Encouraged council to buy someone a gift for the holiday season to cheer them up.
- Councilman Comer : Concurred with what the other members said.
- Councilman Odom : Commended the Administrator on his hard work toward moving the County forward.
- Chairman Haynes : Thanked everyone for helping him along the way and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

There were no comments from the news media.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council voted to adjourn at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC