

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING - December 7, 2015

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.

Bamberg County Council met 5:30 p.m., December 7, 2015, in the courtroom of the Bamberg County Courthouse. **Present:** Chairman Joe Guess, Jr., Councilwoman Alzena Robinson, Councilmen Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Clint Carter, Larry Haynes and Rev. Isaiah Odom. **Others Present:** Administrator Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Dionne Gleaton, Jerry Halmon, Jerry Bell, Alice Johnson, Gina Smith, Derek Jeffcoat, Mallory Biering, Kell Anderson, Lee Davis, Sarah Noel, Patti Yeates, Ryan Slattery, Sharon Williams, Raquel Duncan, Rebecca, Larry Wilson and Veronica Black.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Joe Guess at 5:30 p.m., in the Bamberg County Courtroom. Invocation was rendered by Rev. Isaiah Odom, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Clint Carter.

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved the minutes from the November 9, 2015 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Rev. Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the agenda as submitted.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Carter, council presented a resolution expressing sorrow for the passing of county resident Ms. Essie Moore Carroll to her great-granddaughter Ra-Quel Duncan. Ms. Carroll owned and operated Carroll Mortuary of Bamberg with her husband, the late Hercules Carroll. She was also a retired educator who taught for 30 years. Her vast professional career included serving as a founding member of the Denmark Technical College Area Commission and as director of teacher education and adjunct professor at Voorhees College. Ms. Carroll was a resident of County Council District 2.

Bamberg County Council listened to a report from Kell Anderson, project manager of SCRDA. To date, the speculative building at the CrossRhodes Industrial Park is approximately 95 percent complete and should be finished by the end of the year. The painting is almost finished and there are about six panes of glass that are on back order. They are still pursuing projects that have been carried over from 2014.

Jerry Bell, Bamberg County Chamber Director, reported that the Chamber hosted the 2015 Christmas Tree Lighting on Sunday, December 6, and it was well attended by the community. Upcoming events were mentioned and all were invited to attend. Flyers were given to all in attendance.

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Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported the county's total income for October was \$283,329. Expenses totaled \$859,136, reflecting a deficit of \$575,807. Treasurer Johnson said the county is expecting to be reimbursed from various in house departments for which the county had paid bills. August was \$396,410. Expenses totaled \$568,056.

Finance Director Thomas reported the county's general fund generated \$1,286,855 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of October. Expenditures stood at \$1,872,073, reflecting a deficit of \$585,218. Residential and commercial tax notices were mailed out in October and our tax collections normally increase in December and January. This report was accepted as information.

Administrator Preston reported that the courthouse annex is going as scheduled and completion is targeted for April 2016. A budget package is being developed for the purchase of furniture for the annex. Administrator Preston said he is confident that the county will receive a TAC grant for the parking lot. The Oak tree that is located behind the Library will be trimmed up for cosmetic reasons. Council was offered the opportunity to tour the new building and a time will be coordinated by Clerk To Council Shepherd. The Delinquent Tax Sale was held today and we had 755 parcels this year as compared to 920 parcels last year. Stemming from an improvement plan for the Bamberg County airport and 2 approved grants from the state Aeronautics Commission and state Budget and Control Board for airport amenities, we are working on the improvements at the airport, to include land acquisition and obstruction clearing. Currently, we have \$333,000 in grant funding from the Federal Aviation Administration, along with a \$141,000 grant from the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission. Runway obstructions is underway at the airport and when that is completed, we will be allowed to move forward with working on the runway. The fueling system is being looked at being improved and the possibility of building additional hangers. The county has received a Keep America Beautiful Grant in the amount of \$8,000. We are expecting delivery of our heavy equipment for the Public Works department in January and February.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) Lower Savannah COG -The December meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 10 @ 6:30 p.m. at the Edisto Station.
 - 2) LSCOG (TAC) (Kinard) -Everything is still on track. Money was left over from The Highway 78 project (approximately \$1.2million), and Mr. Kinard was disappointed the funds are being lost. The C-Fund committee needs to meet before the end of December to address issues on Dally Road, located in Denmark. Project will cost about \$450,000.
 - 3) LSCOG Housing Consortium -No additional meeting.
 - 4) SCA -In the process of opening a central office in Hampton. It was unclear whether or not the Barnwell office will remain in operation.
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On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved on first reading, in title only, proposed ordinance authorizing (1) execution and delivery of a fee in lieu of tax incentive agreement between Bamberg County, South Carolina (“County”) and Project Fatback (“Company”) in connection with the establishment of a certain facility in the county (“Project”); (2) the county to covenant in such agreement to accept certain negotiated fees in lieu of ad valorem taxes with respect to the project (“FILOT Payment”); (3) the company to claim certain special source credits against such FILOT Payments; (4) the benefits of a multi-county park to be made available to the company and the project; and (5) other matters relating there.

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved a proposed resolution to amend the agreement for a joint county industrial park among Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, and Hampton Counties so as to enlarge the park; and other matters relating thereto. Hampton County is the host county for this project.

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved a proposed resolution to amend the agreement for a joint industrial park among Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, and Hampton Counties so as to enlarge the park; and other matters thereto related.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, council approved the calendar of events as submitted.

Council approved written request from Mayor Walter O’Rear of Olar, to return to the original plan of using the town’s allocation of penny sales tax money (\$37,000) to renovate the Grey Den building as a community center. Previously, Mayor O’Rear reported to the Bamberg County Council that the town had found another property at 14761 Carolina Highway that was better suited for the proposed Olar Civic Center and would like to purchase and renovate that property. Bamberg County Council then, approved and passed a resolution permitting the town to purchase and renovate the property for that purpose. During the December 7, 2015 Bamberg County Council meeting, a letter was read from Mayor O’Rear stating those plans had fallen through and the town was requesting that the funds be used for the original purpose.

Chairman Guess called for public comments. The following were present and stated concerns regarding roads:

Larry Wilson - Stated concerns regarding paving of Crouch Circle in Bamberg. There are approximately 40 families on that road and it’s almost impassable. A portion of Panther Road also needs attention.

Veronica Black- Resident of Crouch Circle and she stated the road is in a mess and pleaded for relief.

Ryan Slattery, P.E., from Alliance Consulting Engineers, Inc. was present and was asked to take a more in depth look at Panther Road and Crouch Circle and see what can be done to fix the roads and still be economical. These roads are located in Councilman Haynes’ district and he said he has checked Panther Road and Crouch Circle and they are in need of paving and giving the residents some help.

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Chairman Guess called for comments from the council members.

Robinson	:	Thanked the employees and council for their service for the year.
Haynes	:	Thanked the administrator and staff for all that they do.
Carter	:	Thanked everyone for their service.
Kinard	:	Expressed fond memories of Mrs. Martha Guess, mother of Probate Judge Sarah Guess Noel. Remember seeing her smiling face and noting her dedication as a citizen toward attending the monthly council meetings.
Comer	:	Appreciated the contributions made by Mrs. Martha Guess.
Odom	:	Spoke of the dedication of Mrs. Guess.
Guess	:	Conveyed the condolence of Mrs. Guess and wished everyone a happy holiday. Visited SCAC for a meeting and announced that Rep. McCleod after 27 years will not be offering for another election.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council agreed to adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC