

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING - February 2, 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 6:30 p.m., February 2, 2015, in the courtroom of the Bamberg County Courthouse. **Present:** Chairman Joe Guess, Jr., Councilwoman Alzena Robinson, Councilmen Larry Haynes, 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, Ryan Slattery, Kay Maxwell, Gina Smith, Andre' Anderson, Connie Shade, Mallory Hoffman, Dr. F. Marion Dwight, Annette Dwight, Joyce Dwight, Marion Dwight, Sharon Hammond, Jerry Bell and Kell Anderson.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Joe Guess at 6:30 p.m., in the Bamberg County Courtroom. Invocation was rendered by Reverend Isaiah Odom, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Larry Haynes.

On motion by Councilwoman Robinson, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved the minutes from the January 5, 2015 meeting.

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

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, Council presented a resolution to Dr. F. Marion Dwight for his community service and as a long-time physician for 55 years. Dr. Dwight told the council that this was a great honor and he was humbled by it. He further stated that he did not treat patients in his practice, he treated his friends.

Kell Anderson, project manager with Southern Carolina Alliance, reported the alliance is working on several projects including Project Sweep, which could bring 150 jobs to the county. He further stated the SCRDA was able to raise approximately \$848,000 for construction of a spec building for the CrossRhodes Industrial Park, and the remaining balance to come from a loan from Santee Cooper. The project will be put out for bid once the state Department of Health and Environmental Control approves the site development plans.

Jerry Bell, Executive Director of the Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce, reported on upcoming events, including the Sixth Annual Julius Daniels Memorial Blues Festival from 6 to 9 p.m., Saturday, February 28, at the Dane Theater in Denmark. Flyers were distributed to all persons present.

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported that Bamberg County had a total income of \$1,013,456 for December, with total expenses at \$571,881. Treasurer Johnson said it was

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wonderful to see less expenses and more income. Councilman Kinard noted the county's finances were improving considering it was \$637,155.55 in the negative at the same time last year.

Finance Director Thomas reported the county's general fund had generated \$3,933,962 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of December. Expenditures stood at \$3,217,833. The county collected \$451,328 year-to-date in its special revenue fund, which consists of the county's E-911, road maintenance and rural fire service funds. Year-to-date expenditures stood at \$395,259. The county collected \$565,257 year-to-date in the enterprise fund, which consists of solid waste funds. Year-to-date expenditures stood at \$545,377. An assertive effort to collect past due landfill tipping fees has been profitable, with year-to-date fee collection standing at \$284,772 – representing 74 percent of the annual budget of \$370,000. Last year's collection was \$191,383.

Controller Gina Humphreys reported that two of the issues that had prevented Bamberg County from receiving a clean audit report for the past several years have been resolved. Past audit reports had cited the county's failure to have an updated capital asset list (not done since 2011), and not reconciling 10 years' worth of jail inmate accounts. Ms. Humphreys further stated every asset has been classified and all the depreciation calculations have been brought up to date. Staff members were thanked for their help in this effort.

Administrator Preston informed the Council of the groundbreaking ceremony the Courthouse Annex to take place on Tuesday, February 10, at 3:00 p.m. The 2015 Planning Retreat is scheduled for Friday, March 6 at 9:00 a.m., with Dennis Lambries serving as the facilitator. The report for Bamberg County's road inventory has been received. It was also reported that Keep America Beautiful (KAB) has already had 2 meetings. Design for the Ehrhardt Project to be done by the end of this month. They have received an 80% grant and other grants may be available for the sidewalks.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) Lower Savannah COG -Next scheduled meeting will be in Allendale at the Brandt Building.
received the Board Attendance award.
- 2) SCA -Attended meeting in Columbia on Tues. and it was very informative.
- 3) Three Rivers -Meeting Thursday at SRS.
- 4) LSCOG (TAC) -Attended meeting in Aiken. Road between Denmark and Bamberg has been signed off. Still a problem with gate being opened leading to Denmark-Tech campus.
- 5) LSCOG Housing Consortium -No meeting scheduled.
- 6) Bamberg County Tourism & Recreation -Met 1/26 @ Hooten-Black House. Report from the January 26, 21015 meeting:

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Tourism and Recreation Report: - Present: Alzena Robinson, Cynthia McMillan, Jerry Bell, Nina Haynes, Trent Kinard, Allen Mehrad, Doretta Elliott, Connie Shade, Joey Preston and Thomas M. Thomas. The meeting was called to order Chairman Alzena Robinson and invocation was rendered by Committeeman Trent Kinard. Items discussed: Trent Kinard and Doretta Elliott gave an update of ownership of all six boat landings: Bobcat, Brabham, Zig-Zag, Buford Bridge, Claude and Highway 601. Discussion was held DNR for improvements and was reported currently working on a needs assessment plan. A cost of \$80,000 is estimated for the boat landing improvements. The committee agreed to set up a tour of all landings as well as an agreement of understanding regarding the boat landing respective owners. The commit will begin to research the resources of funds through grants. Administrator Preston gave an update on the airport and location in which a preliminary layout of a proposed recreation complex was provided. Also, check with FEMA on the availability of resources out there to assist with cleaning the rivers. It was also suggested that contact be made to the Parks and Recreation in order to send a representative down to speak with the committee around mid-January to assist the county with the committee's vision and purpose. It was recommended that contact be made to Calvin Odom on whether he still would like to participate on this committee. Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved on first reading, in title only, an ordinance seeking to reaffirm the six county region of the Lower Savannah Workforce Investment Area .

Ryan Slattery of Alliance Consulting Engineers out of Columbia, presented the council with a road inventory and assessment report (Power Point presentation) that he said will ultimately be used to develop a roadway ordinance. Bamberg County has 297 county roads totaling 179 miles. Mr. Slattery also reported the project to construct 1,000 feet of sidewalk in the town of Ehrhardt is finally under way. The design will be permitted by the end of February and at the very end, they will be waiting on the right-of-way and the environmental review from the DOT. This will be a three to four month period. In referencing legislation that could potentially force counties to accept state secondary roads into their roadway systems. It is estimated that it would impact Bamberg County of about \$1.7 million, along with about \$450,000 in equipment and supply costs. After the presentation, on motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Carter, council approved on first reading, in title only, an ordinance identifying and designating certain roads in Bamberg County as county roads; accepting such roads into the Bamberg County Road System; and other matters related thereto.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved drafting a resolution to express its sorrow at the passing of Rita Murdaugh Sease, whose community involvement included her service as chairperson of the Bamberg School District One Board of Trustees and member of the Bamberg County Recreation Committee.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, council approved drafting a resolution to recognize Bamberg County Citizen Bob Clary of Bamberg for his contributions to the county.

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

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Kinard, at the request of Chairman Guess, council approved the appointment of the Bamberg County Council Finance (*Chairman Joe Guess, Councilmen Haynes and Odom*), and will accept placement of the remaining standing committees at the March 2, 2015 meeting.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council reappointed Councilwoman Alzena Robinson to the Southern Carolina Alliance Board. Councilman Trent Kinard opposed her reappointment.

Chairman Guess called for comments from the public, council and news media.

There being no further discussion of business, on motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Carter, council agreed to adjourn at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC