

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 Bamberg Leader*, *The Times and Democrat*, Southern Carolina Regional Alliance, Bamberg County Library, Bamberg County Website and Bamberg County Courthouse Annex.

In Light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bamberg County Council met 6:00 p.m., November 7, 2022 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside livestreaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Chairman Spencer Donaldson, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Clint Carter, Larry Haynes, Phil Myers, Jr. and Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Alice Johnson, Kenneth Bamberg, Chip Maier, Donald Kirby, Letitia Dowling, Joey Stanfield, Miriam Beard, Kimoni Hickman and Kay Clary.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Spencer Donaldson at 6:00 p.m. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Clint Carter, followed with the pledge of allegiance led by Councilwoman Sharon Hammond.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Carter, council approved the minutes from the October 3, 2022 regular meeting with necessary corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Carter, the agenda was approved as submitted.

Sheriff Kenneth Bamberg was present to provide the Council with an overall update of his department. He stated that at the present, the department is short of 2 deputies, but the Dispatch Department is now fully staffed. It was again mentioned of the grant funding that has been received for the purchase of body cameras for the deputies. Also, radios and various other equipment will be purchased. In an effort to assist and help provide updated equipment for communication and security purposes, three radios will be awarded to Denmark Technical College's Public Safety Department. This will enable everyone to be on the same frequency. Representative Justin Bamberg has announced that through his committee it has been made possible for \$200,000 to be appropriated for the sheriff's department. Sheriff Bamberg called Deputy Joey Stanfield to the front to present him with a lapel pin for recently performing an emergency treatment by using NARCAN for a citizen that had suffered an opioid overdose. The public was advised if you have family members or friends that you know may have a substance abuse problem, please try and encourage them to seek help. Council accepted this report as information and congratulated Deputy Stanfield for his bravery and awareness.

Council listened to a presentation depicting a capital improvement vision for Voorhees University as bought forth by Ms. Letitia Dowling, special assistant to the president for transformation. Ms. Dowling was excited about various projects that are being implemented and to be implemented at the University, alongside ensuring that an impact be made in the Denmark community and Bamberg County, as well. Plans are being made to improve the former Denmark-Olar Elementary School and it will serve its Becoming Beloved Community Initiative and they will also be housed there as well. It will also house their programs for rural community development, social and environmental justice institute, and a women's

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institute for advancement will be housed there as well. Also, in addition to developing a community technology center, there are plans to have a restaurant or a kitchen in there that will be accessible by the community. Several other projects were expounded on during Ms. Dowling's presentation. Restoration of the Rosenwald property that's located across from the Denmark-Olar Elementary School is among the projects. This will house a pictorial museum that captures the history of that property and a garden/greenhouse will share the site. A national award from IBM was received to develop a national cybersecurity system that's going to be funded by IBM. Plans are in the making to preserve the former elementary school's gymnasium, with the fields around it to be used for recreation activities for the campus and community. The university owns 378 acres of land, a small apartment complex and six homes. They are expecting to develop apartments for faculty/staff and the community on the approximately 100 acres they have cleared. There are several other projects that they presently have in focus. At the end of the presentation, Council thanked Ms. Dowling for the presentation.

Mr. Kimoni Hickman, Vice-President for Institutional Advancement & Effectiveness for Denmark Technical College, reported on the partnership to bring equity to the Business Development Association through a multimillion-dollar corporate donation, created 100 scholarships for adult learners and graduates of Denmark Technical College. The establishment of Cyber Bridge Scholarships to High-Paying Jobs in a fully funded \$2.5 million HBCU scholar fund to promote diversity in the cybersecurity industry. Fusion Cyber is a cybersecurity education services company and cyber talent agency based in Washington, D.C. It helps students learn, network and build their skills with virtual cyber security risk management framework training for the newly founded program. Mr. Hickman pointed out that one of Fusion Cyber's goals is to help fill the 718,000 open cyber positions across the United States. He informed Administrator Preston that he will be dropping off some brochures by his office by Wednesday. A bus has been donated for the students that will be attending the program. Council thanked Mr. Hickman for attending and providing them with this information.

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:

Southern Carolina Alliance – Monthly Report

Project Manager Brian Warner was absent and will make his report at the December meeting.

Bamberg County Treasurer – Monthly Report

County Treasurer Alice Johnson gave the September financial report, stating they had \$605,689.38 in income and expenditures of \$740,456.88, leaving a negative balance of \$134,767.50. When the negative bank balance at the end of September (\$864,208.28) was added, the county's regular account stood at a negative \$998,975.78. This report was accepted as information.

Bamberg County Finance – Monthly Report

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund had year-to-date revenues of \$1,293,004 as of the end of September. Expenditures stood at \$2,075,712, for a negative general fund balance of (\$782,708). This report was received as information.

Bamberg County Administrator

Administrator Preston reported that there were about 200 people in attendance at the county fire service banquet held Friday, November 4th at Ghents Branch Baptist Church in Denmark. Service awards were presented, along with the 2022 Bamberg County Firefighter of the Year award, which was presented to

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Rodney Weaver of the Denmark Fire Department. The 2021 County Firefighter of the Year was Michelle Martin of the Colston Fire Department. Results of the state Department of Transportation's litter-pickup program in District 7, approximately 4,000 pounds were picked up. Councilman Comer asked that Dally Road in Denmark, be revisited and do whatever it takes to get that road back on the list. PRCT has completed Phase 1 & 2 as of October 4. Lazy Lane and Salty Lane will be going out for bid the first portion of January 2023. Final walk-throughs at the hospital and inspections on safety systems, fire systems and all that on the inside of the building will be done. We are waiting for the furniture to be delivered. After the approval is received on the safety things on the inside and the telephone lines that run inside, then we can gradually move into the building. The asbestos removal from the old courthouse will be complete next week. Groundbreaking was held for Holman's Bridge Fire Station. We are still expecting a tour of the Barrel Plant. The Delinquent Tax Sale was held today and things went well. Councilman Carter stated that for these sales we need to look out for the local people for these kind of sales. Council accepted this report as information.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the calendar of events after adding LSCOG Christmas Dinner.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the appointment of Ms. Edna Childs to the Bamberg County Office on Aging board as a representative from Council District 6.

Chairman Donaldson called for public comments during this segment. Comments were received from Ms. Miriam Beard.

During comments from council, they thanked the public for attending, thanked the employees for their diligence and hard work, asked everyone to vote on tomorrow and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Dr. Goodman, seconded by Councilman Carter, the meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, Clerk to Council