

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.

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In Light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bamberg County Council met 6:00 p.m., December 5, 2022 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside live streaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Chairman Spencer Donaldson, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Larry Haynes, Phil Myers, Jr. and Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II. **Absent:** Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., and Clint Carter. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Alice Johnson, Chip Maier, Donald Kirby, Kenneth Bamberg, Brian Warner, Paul Eubanks and four additional visitors.

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Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Spencer Donaldson at 6:00 p.m. Invocation was rendered by Dr. Jonathan Goodman, followed with the pledge of allegiance led by Councilman Phil Myers.

On motion by Dr. Goodman, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the minutes from the November 7, 2022 regular meeting after the following change was requested by Councilman Myers (to change Rodney Weaver of the Denmark Police Department and place him with Denmark Fire Department instead). Councilwoman Hammond requested that Andy Zissett be listed from the Olar Fire Department instead of the Hunters Chapel Fire Department. These two items will be corrected within the November 7, 2022 minutes.

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

#### **COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:**

##### **Southern Carolina Alliance – Monthly Report**

Southern Carolina Alliance Project Manager Brian Warner, reported on the Phoenix Specialty expansion. It was announced that Phoenix Specialty will have a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the expansion on Thursday, December 8, 2022 at 11 a.m. Mr. Warner continued to inform of SCA working with an existing industry that is interested in pursuing expansion as well. Also, there are possible industries that are considering locating in this area and SCA is continuing to promote the spec building. Bamberg County has received a grant to be used for the construction of a new spec building. At this time, plans are being explored and at what point it will be done. Questions were asked whether the size of the existing spec building is a concern as to why no one has located there. The building is a 40,000 square foot building with the expandable capacity to 85,000 square feet. The main concentration is to get an occupant into the building. The Council thanked Mr. Warner for his report.

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##### **Bamberg County Treasurer – Monthly Report**

County Treasurer Alice Johnson gave the October financial report, stating they had \$1,288,745.24 in income and expenditures of \$612,808.62, leaving a positive balance of \$675,936.62. When the negative bank balance at the end of September \$822,041.52 was added, the county's regular account

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stood at a negative \$146,104.90. 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 \$1,472,007 as of the end of October. Expenditures stood at \$2,587,182, for a negative general fund balance of \$1,115,175. This report was received as information.

**Bamberg County Controller – Monthly Report**

Controller Gina Smith gave an overall synopsis of the finances as pointed out in Treasurer Johnson's report. Ms. Smith was asked about the American Rescue Plan Act money as whether it is making a difference in the county's cash flow. She responded that last year this time, we had used \$800,000 of American Rescue Plan money and so far this fiscal year we have used \$600,000 leaving a balance of \$1,408,265.

**Bamberg County Administrator**

Administrator Preston thanked council for coming out to the Christmas tree lighting on Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. It was reported that a \$400,000 grant was received to be used toward the construction of another spec building. It was also reported that the Delinquent Tax Sale went well and a total of \$909,770 was collected. The City has been extended thanks for permitting the use of the Civic Center for the tax sale to be conducted. A C-Fund meeting will be scheduled and held in the near future and everyone will be notified in a timely fashion. A meeting has been scheduled with County officials and DSS officials in Columbia regarding housing of DSS. The old courthouse renovation is moving along and all of the asbestos has been removed. The council thanked Administrator Preston for the update

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On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved a resolution commemorating the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary (1897 – 2022) of the founding of Bamberg County.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Dr. Goodman, council approved a resolution to acknowledge and honor Michelle Martin as 2022 Colston Fire Department Firefighter of the Year and the 2021 Bamberg County firefighter of the Year.

On motion by Councilman Myers, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved a resolution to acknowledge and honor Rodney Weaver as 2022 Denmark Fire Department Firefighter of the Year and the 2022 Bamberg County Firefighter of the Year.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Dr. Goodman, council approved a resolution to acknowledge and honor Derrick Ford as 2022 Clear Pond Fire Department Firefighter of the Year.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved a resolution to acknowledge and honor Harry Hughes as 2022 Ehrhardt Fire Department Firefighter of the Year.

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On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved a resolution to acknowledge and honor Gilbert Korver as 2022 Govan Fire Department Firefighter of the Year.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved a resolution to acknowledge and honor Ralph Rentz as 2022 Hunters Chapel Fire Department Firefighter of the Year.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Dr. Goodman, council approved a resolution to acknowledge and honor Richard Crosby as 2022 Little Swamp Fire Department Firefighter of the Year.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Dr. Goodman, council approved a resolution to acknowledge and honor Andy Zissett as 2022 Olar Fire Department Firefighter of the Year.

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

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Chairman Donaldson called for public comments during this segment of the meeting. No public comments were made.

During comments from council, they thanked the public for attending, thanked the employees for their diligence and hard work, and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Haynes, the meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, Clerk to Council