

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING - January 7, 2019

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*, Southern Carolina Regional Alliance, Bamberg County Library, Bamberg County Website, Bamberg County Courthouse Annex and a copy posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the County Courthouse.

Bamberg County Council met 6:30 p.m., January 7, 2019 in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Clint Carter, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Isaiah Odom, Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr., and Larry Haynes. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Jerry Halmon, Gina Smith, Alice Johnson, Christopher Hall, William Molnar, Sarah G. Noel, Mary Tilton, Booker Patrick, Pauletta Plowden, Detra' Bruce, Farrell Polaski, Deanna Berry Darrell Brooker, Jerry Bell, Jeanette Driggers, Steve Fail, James Collins, Gail Ellis, Ken Ahlin and Ruthie Brown.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Clint Carter at 6:00 p.m., in the Chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. Invocation was rendered by Reverend Odom, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Joe Guess, Jr.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the minutes from the December 3 and December 17, 2018 meetings with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the agenda after Chairman Carter added recognition of Reverend Isaiah Odom for 40 years of service as a member of the Bamberg County Council.

Bamberg County Probate Judge Sarah Guess Noel swore in re-elected Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, District 2; Councilman Larry Haynes, District 3 and Councilman Evert Comer, Jr., District 6. Others assisting in the swearing in were Bamberg County Deputy Administrator T. M. Thomas and Dr. Christopher Hall, Interim President of Denmark Technical College.

Chairman Carter recognized Reverend Isaiah Odom for his 40 years of service as a councilman on the Bamberg County Council by presenting him with a plaque and a 40 year service pin. After being pinned by Clerk to Council Rose R. Shepherd, Reverend Odom thanked everyone for their support over the years.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, according to the Bamberg County Council Organization and Procedural Rules, council approved changing of the gavel from past Chairman Clint Carter to the new Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard for 2019.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Reverend Odom, according to the same policy as followed with chairmanship, council approved the selection of vice chairman by district rotation as previously set forth to the new vice chairman Councilwoman Sharon Hammond.

Bamberg County Council heard a presentation from Dr. Christopher J. Hall, President of Denmark Technical College. Dr. Hall thanked the council for the funds that were provided to the college with the addition of one mill to the county's fiscal year 2019 budget. The funds will amount to between \$26,000 and \$27,000 and they can only be used for its physical plant and property. Dr. Hall also reported on the college's homecoming to be held Friday and Saturday, February 1-3. A

January 7, 2019....continued

Career Day and the Presidential Scholarship Gala, which raised approximately \$35,000 last year, will be included in Friday's activities and an annual parade and basketball games will be held on Saturday. Denmark Technical College has employed a consultant to help draft a new strategic plan and wanted the council to be included a part of the process.

The college has a strategic plan that was developed in 2005 and was slated to run through 2020. President Hall stated that the college had approximately 50 dual-enrollment students from surrounding high schools last semester. Dual enrollment is a program allowing high school students to take college courses and receive credit for doing so. Denmark Technical College was also selected for the ManuFirst SC grant. In partnership with the Department of Commerce, several technical colleges from around the state were awarded this grant to train individuals in Lean Manufacturing at no cost to the students. Classes are scheduled to begin on January 15, 2019. Lean Manufacturing is a systematic method for waste minimization within a manufacturing system without sacrificing productivity.

A report was given by Bamberg County First Steps Executive Director Pauletta Plowden. Director Plowden said the First Steps Children and Parents Sharing (CAPS) Program has been endorsed by the Parents as Teachers National Center as a Blue Ribbon affiliate. The designation recognized the program as one of the top performing home visiting affiliates within the international Parents and Teachers program network. Noting, sometimes parents don't need a handout but a hand up, so they try to focus on those things. They ensure a variety of resources to assist their efforts outside of their basic two home visits a month. Council thanked Ms. Plowden for the fine job being done.

SouthernCarolina Alliance Senior Project Manager Darrell Booker reported that nine projects are currently actively considering locating in Bamberg County, with the county receiving a total of 10 site visits last year. Mr. Booker said that he will present a written report at the February meeting.

Bamberg County Chamber President Jerry Bell gave an update on upcoming events within the county. Flyers listing additional events in the community were distributed to the citizens present. Mr. Bell announced the RURAL STRONG Business Resource Expo for small business owners and farmers, which will be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon Thursday, January 17, in Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College's Roquemore Auditorium.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund had \$2,687,919 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of November. Expenditures stood at \$310,515 leaving a balance of \$418,116. All departments are continuing to operate within their budgets.

Administrator Preston had Bamberg County Tax Assessor Doretta Elliott give highlights on reassessment for Bamberg County. All properties have been completed and the information will be mailed out to tax payers soon. Each tax payer will have ninety days to appeal their notices if they have discrepancies. Administrator Preston reported that we deal with the USDA and due to the government shutdown the USDA has pretty much closed up shop. We have three fire trucks approved through them, three grants and a loan for the fire trucks. The application for the courthouse cannot be submitted right now because the government shutdown is affecting us there. We notified our Senators and House members by letter to let them know how we feel about the shutdown and we need them to get the government back up and running again. Progress is being made with the codification process and we will be going through each document one by one. The county received another \$300,000 grant (over a 2 year span), from the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission for continued upgrades at the Bamberg County Airport. A Needs Assessment hosted by Lower Savannah COG will be held in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, January 29th at 5:30 p.m., all are invited to attend. Administrator Preston's report was received as information.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) -No Report
 - 2) LSCOG -Christmas gathering was held in December.
 - 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) -Meeting is coming up. The University Mile has been approved will be started in the spring.
-

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved a proposed resolution establishing written public notice of Bamberg County Council meeting schedule for calendar year 2019.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, council reappointed Mr. Jerry Halmon to the Thoroughbred Country Tourism Advisory Committee with term expiring January 2022.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council reappointed Ms. Rena Riddle to the Thoroughbred Country Tourism Advisory Committee with term expiring January 2023.

Discussion and possible date for 2019 Bamberg County Council's Planning Retreat will be followed up by Administrator Preston.

At this time, Chairman Carter called for public comments. Those speaking: Gail Ellis (List of questions to be answered); James Collins (Complaint of taxes); Deanna Berry (Safe water for Denmark) and Ken Ahlin (Transparency – Penny Sales Tax).

Council made comments to the public and thanked them for attending the meeting and showing concern.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, council voted for the meeting to be adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC