

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

- January 8, 2024

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, agendas for the following meeting were delivered 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., January 8, 2024 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside live streaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Chairman Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Phil Myers, Jr., Clint Carter, Larry Haynes and Spencer Donaldson. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, Richard Ness, T.M. Thomas, Gina Smith, Chip Maier, Alisha Moore, Kenneth Bamberg, Joshua Urwick, Moses Cheatham, Bill Johnson, Roger Hughes and one additional visitor.

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

In remembrance of our late Heavy Equipment Operator II of thirty-five consecutive years, Mr. John E. Johnson, a moment of silence was acknowledged in memory of his dedicated and committed service to Bamberg County in the Public Works Department. Mr. Johnson will be missed by his coworkers and the County as a whole.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved the minutes from the December 4, 2023 meeting with necessary corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved the agenda as submitted.

Outgoing Chairman Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II passed the gavel to his successor Councilman Evert Comer, Jr. representing District 6, who previously served in the capacity as Vice-Chairman.

After Chairman Comer's appointment, on behalf of County Council and the Administration, Dr. Goodman was presented with a plaque of appreciation for his dedicated service as Chairman for 2023. Dr. Goodman commented that he was honored to serve during a crucial year in Bamberg County's economic development and looks forward to continuing to serve the constituents in District 5. Several vast accomplishments were made under his leadership with all being structured for the advancement and progress of Bamberg County.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, Council approved the appointment as set forth by the Bamberg County Council Policy and Rules (appointment by district rotation), Councilman Clint Carter, representing District 7 to serve as Vice Chairman for 2024.

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COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:

Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance - Monthly Report

Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance Project Director Joshua Urwick reported that December was a little slow. There were only two site visits, but they have some projects coming in the pipeline. January is already off to a great start and hopefully that trend will continue. Councilwoman Hammond wanted to know when was the last time the county landed a new business, rather than the expansion of an existing industry. Mr. Urwick replied that it would have been in 2021, when South Carolina Oak to Barrel, LLC, announced plans to establish operations in Bamberg County. Councilwoman Hammond said she would like for the County to get the opportunity to bring in some revenue. Also work on creating opportunities to bring in some more revenue and work together to think outside the box and try to come up with ways where we can bring in that revenue and sustain it. Council thanked Mr. Urwick for the update.

Bamberg County Treasurer - Monthly Report -

County Treasurer Alice Johnson gave the financial report, stating that in November the county had \$485,636.19 in income and expenditures of \$981,904.05, for a negative balance of \$496,267.86. When the \$1,133,061.81 bank balance at the end of October was added, the county's regular account stood at a positive \$636,793.95.

Bamberg County Budget - Monthly Report - Postponed until February 2024 (this report is generated from treasurer's report).

Bamberg County Administrator - Monthly Report

Administrator Preston reported to council on: 1) C-Funds Meeting is scheduled for January 31 at 6 p.m. in Council Chambers; 2) Scandinavian Relay Race will take place on Saturday, January 27. The 33 mile run with 100 scheduled runners will cover portions of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland; 3) Reported that state Department of Natural Resource officials will move into the Kearse Agricultural Building at 847 Calhoun Street; 4) Cables have been cut at the courthouse and they are still trying to stabilize the foundation; and 5) Thursday, January 25th at SCA in Barnwell, SC - hosting of SCAC President Roy Costner. This report was accepted as information.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council gave third reading to a proposed ordinance to amend Bamberg County Ordinance #18-17-4 limited regards and particulars, only, so as to add an erroneously omitted road to the County Road List; and other matters related thereto. The name of the road that is proposed to be added is Old Town Lane Road, located in Denmark.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council gave second reading to an ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of a special source revenue credit agreement by and between Bamberg County, South Carolina and Rockberg, LLC with respect to certain economic development property in the county, whereby such property will receive certain special source revenue credits in respect of investment in infrastructure.

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On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved a resolution establishing written public notice of Bamberg County Council Meeting schedule for calendar year 2024. Meeting dates: January 8, February 5, March 4, April 8, May 6, June 3, July 1, August 12, September 9, October 7, November 4 and December 2, 2024.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved the calendar of events after adding an event for Thursday, January 25th at SCA in Barnwell, SC - hosting SCAC President Roy Costner.

Chairman called for comments from council. All present were thanked for their attendance, employees were thanked for their hard work, appreciation was given to Administrator Preston and staff, hope for the new year that Bamberg County get new businesses and more revenue and all were asked to pray for world peace.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Dr. Goodman, seconded by Councilman Haynes, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC