

**MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
June 11, 2018**

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.

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Bamberg County Council met 6:00 p.m., June 11, 2018, in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Clint Carter, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Rev. Isaiah Odom, Councilmen Trent Kinard, Larry Haynes and Evert Comer, Jr. **Absent:** Councilman Joe Guess. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Dionne Gleaton, Jerry Bell, Jonathan Hutto, Sidney Evering, II.

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Bamberg County Council special called 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 Councilman Evert Comer, Jr., followed with the pledge of allegiance by Chairman Clint Carter.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Rev. Odom, the agenda was approved as submitted.

Capital Project Sales and Use Tax Commission Chairman Jerry Bell, presented a resolution of the 2018 Capital Project Sales and Use Tax Ballot Question; and other matters related thereto. Listed in the list was the following proposed projects:

- County law enforcement and health and human service complex -- \$3.8 million
- Renovation of old city hall and relocation of police department in Denmark - \$400,000
- Upgrade of water system in Olar -- \$71,000
- Renovation of community center in Little Swamp community -- \$15,000
- Completion of Ehrhardt Park -- \$105,000
- Renovation of Govan Town Hall -- \$50,000
- Construction of walking berm in Bamberg to include lighting, ditch repair and walkway upgrades -- \$125,000
- Installation of a bicycle and walking trail and fountain lighting in Raider Park in Bamberg -- \$125,000
- Renovation of Olar Town Hall -- \$3,000

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer the resolution presented by Mr. Bell was approved.

Administrator Preston presented an in depth power point presentation focusing on renovations for the historic courthouse which was built in 1894. The loan amount for the project is \$6 million with a 3.875 percent interest rate for a 40 year term. Annual payments will be approximately \$298,000 under the proposed financing plan. Councilwoman Hammond said she supports the courthouse being restored, she has concerns about how the project is going to be paid for without a millage increase. The Bamberg Facilities Corporation gave their approval to support the plan at an earlier meeting they held about two weeks ago. Some of the named deficiencies of the courthouse were: foundational cracks, asbestos, water penetration, no hot water, inadequate disability accessibility, plumbing and electrical problems. Also, Administrator Preston said the county C-Fund Committee has committed \$250,000 to the project to improve the parking around

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the courthouse. It is proposed to set up mobile units to house offices from the courthouse while the project is in progress. Judge Early will probably stay at his office in Barnwell or Aiken while renovations are being done. Councilman Kinard said as we move forward in restoring the Bamberg County Courthouse to her former glory, we need to remember that this is not just a building, it is about preserving our history. After a lengthy discussion, on motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved a resolution supporting an installment plan of finance to renovate or expand certain facilities, including the courthouse and refurbished historic caboose; and other related matters. Those members voting in favor in favor: Haynes, Comer, Guess, Kinard and Odom. Abstaining: Hammond. Attorney Sidney Evinger said the county has been averaging approximately \$800,000 in sales tax collections each year. Advice given to the commission was to issue two bonds. One for approximately \$4.3 million just to be a little on the conservative side to make sure that the collections continue to come in at about \$800,000 rate. The main reason to do this is because if the sales tax collections ever dip to the point where they were not sufficient to pay for the bond, then the county would be responsible for raising millage to accommodate that. And so we didn't want to have council do that.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond and Reverend Odom, council gave second reading to a proposed ordinance to levy and re-impost a one percent sales and use tax, subject to a referendum in Bamberg County pursuant to the Capital Project Sales Tax Act, South Carolina Code.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Odom, council approved on second reading of an ordinance to adopt the operating and capital budgets of Bamberg County for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2018 and ending June 30, 2019, and to make appropriations for such Bamberg County budgets for county ordinary purposes and for other county purposes for which the county may levy a tax; t provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real estate properties in Bamberg County for such ordinary purposes, including sufficient tax to pay the principal and interest on outstanding indebtedness of Bamberg County maturing during said fiscal year; and to provide for other matters relating to Bamberg County and Bamberg County budgetary matters.

After a brief discussion, council scheduled a work session for Tuesday, June 19, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, council adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC