

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., June 5, 2023 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., Spencer Donaldson, Clint Carter and Larry Haynes. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, Richard Ness, T.M. Thomas, Gina Smith, Alice Johnson, Chip Maier, Donald Kirby, Kenneth Bamberg, Rev. Isaiah Odom, Paul Eubanks, Regina Gatlin, Justin Vernon, Richard Johnson, Richard Preacher, Aja Harriott, John Matthews, James Hall, Brad Tarter, Dwayne Duckson, Ruthie Rish, Josh Urwick, Gail Posey, Booker Patrick Corey Ramsey, Chief Smoak and five visitors.

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

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the minutes from the May 1, 2023 meeting with necessary corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved the minutes from the May 22, 2023 special called council meeting.

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

Sheriff Kenneth Bamberg gave an update of the Bamberg County Sheriff's Department by recognizing several agencies who aided in the reverberation of the shooting incident of S.C. Highway Patrol Lance Corporal B.A. Frazier that took place on April 16. Those agencies recognized for their assistance during and after the shooting incident were: the Department of Natural Resources; S.C. Highway Patrol; Denmark and Govan Fire Departments; Bamberg County EMS; S.C. Law Enforcement Division and all first responders. Sheriff Bamberg presented Sgt. Dwayne Duckson of the Bamberg County Sheriff's Office with the "Life Saving Award" for his actions displayed and John Matthews and Aja Harriott were presented with the "Hero Award" for their service demonstrated during the ordeal. Sgt. Richard Preacher, SC Highway Patrol Cpl. Brad Tarter and Bamberg Police Department Sgt. James Hall were recognized for their efforts in locating, pursuing and arresting the suspect. Council commended the agencies for their courageous actions and thanked them for their presence at the meeting.

Bamberg County Recreation Committee Chairman Curtis Tyler, Jr., presented as recommended by the committee, recreation grants in the amount of \$823.52 for the following programs: Bamberg County Youth Baseball (ages 6 and under); Bamberg Youth Softball (girls 7-9); Bamberg Youth Softball (girls 10-12); Bamberg Youth Baseball (boys 7-8); Bamberg Youth Baseball (boys 9-10); Bamberg Youth Baseball (boys 11-12); Bamberg Youth

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Baseball (boys 13-14; Bamberg County 4-H (ages 5-18); Summer Enrichment/Recreation Program (ages 10-18); Bamberg County First Steps (preschool); Football Camp (ages 6-12); Shake House Boxing (ages 6 and up); Bamberg Youth Basketball (girls 6-8); Bamberg Youth Basketball (boys 6-8); Bamberg Youth Basketball (girls 9-13); Bamberg Youth basketball (boys 9-10); and Bamberg Youth Basketball (boys 11-13). Council endorsed the report as submitted.

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:

Southern Carolina Alliance - Monthly Report

Southern Carolina Alliance Project Manager Josh Urwick reported that there are two existing industries that are looking to expand and hopefully additional information will be shared and some positive announcements are expected within the next two months. In further comments Mr. Urwick said the SCA has applied for a site enhancement grant for unceasing development of the CrossRhodes Industrial Park. Council accepted this report as information.

Bamberg County Treasurer - Monthly Report

County Treasurer Alice Johnson gave the April financial report, stating they had \$1,148,881.10 in income and expenditures of \$782,996.98, leaving a positive balance of \$365,884.12. When the positive bank balance at the end of March (\$539,960.75) was added, the county's regular account stood at a positive \$905,844.87. This report was received as information.

Bamberg County Finance - Monthly Report

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund had year-to-date revenues of \$8,195,649 as of the end of April. Expenditures stood at \$7,022,391, for a positive general fund balance of \$1,173,258. The county departments are continuing to operate within their budgets. This report was received as information.

Bamberg County Administrator - Monthly Report

Administrator Preston reported on the status of the new law enforcement center that's scheduled to open along with the ribbon cutting on Friday, July 28th, the program is currently being developed. The health department and the Veterans Affairs office will be opened a little later. The bids came in on the foundation work for the county courthouse renovation project and the bid for \$156,000 was accepted. Within the \$156,000 figure, 2 additional doors were added and will be used for entrance under the courthouse. Other things will be taking place, but that work is scheduled to be completed by September 25, 2023. Progress is being made on the construction of the Holman's Bridge Road fire station. DHEC has issued the permits and work will soon begin on that project. The Broadband update - a map will be coming shortly for presentation. Administrator Preston said that the council will have a special called meeting to discuss EMS contractual issues. This report was received as information.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Comer, council gave second reading, in title only, of an ordinance to adopt the operating and capital budgets of Bamberg County for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024, and to make

appropriations for such Bamberg County budgets for county ordinary purposes for which the county may levy a tax; to provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real estate June 5, 2023....continued

properties in Bamberg County for such county 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. Controller Gina Smith provided comments on the proposed \$27.5 million spending plan for the upcoming budget year. The budget dictates a general fund of \$10.4 million, special revenue, \$6.8 million; enterprise, \$1.5 million; debt service, \$448,150, and capital projects, \$8.4 million. Controller Smith continued to report outside of inflation, some budget challenges include: balancing needs against the resources, attracting and retaining quality staff, providing good equipment for employees and competing needs with limited resources. The proposed budget reflects a \$2.5 million decrease from last year's spending plan. The countywide value of a mill is \$31,340, and last year it was \$30,800. The value of a mill has increased by about 1.5 percent over FY 23. Under the current millage rate, owners of houses valued at \$100,000 pay \$842.90 annually in property tax. The tentative spending plan includes a 3 percent cost-of-living increase for employees. Council voting in favor of second reading of the budget: Councilmen Haynes, Comer, Donaldson and Dr. Goodman. Council voting not in favor of second reading of the budget: Councilwoman Hammond, Councilman Carter and Abstaining the vote: Councilman Myers. Public hearing and third and final reading of the budget is scheduled for Tuesday, June 20, at 6:00 p.m.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, the calendar of events was approved.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved the resignation of Bamberg County Library Board Member Ms. Lillian Bamberg, District 4 and the appointment of Ms. Brandi Napier as her replacement.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Carter, council approved the Lower Savannah Workforce Development Area SC Work System Memorandum of Understanding - Pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Chairman Goodman called for comments from council. During comments from council, all were thanked for their attendance, the employees were also acknowledged for their diligence and hard work, all graduates from Denmark-Olar, Bamberg-Ehrhardt and Jefferson Davis Academy, the Bamberg County Sheriff's Department and all fathers were wished a "Happy Father's Day".

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Haynes, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC