

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*, SouthernCarolina 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.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bamberg County Council met 6:00 p.m., November 1, 2021 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside live streaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Chairman Larry Haynes, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Spencer Donaldson, Phil Myers, Jr., Clint Carter and Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Alice Johnson, Gina Smith, Chip Maier, Kenneth Bamberg, Garrett Dragano, Donald Kirby, Sh’Kur Francis, Laura McKenzie, Booker Patrick, Sue Clayton, Dave Clayton, Ray Jones, Brent Robertson, Sharon Carter and several additional attendees.

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

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the minutes from the October 4, 2021 meeting with necessary corrections should there be any.

On motion by Dr. Goodman, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, the agenda was approved as submitted.

SouthernCarolina Alliance – Be Bamberg Coordinator Laura McKenzie reported on the status of the county-wide cleanup campaign held October 23, 2021. Ms. McKenzie was delighted to announce the participation of approximately 131 volunteers and the assistance of Keep Bamberg County Beautiful coordinator Sh’Kur Francis and Bamberg County Operations Director Bill Johnson. The largest team of volunteers was the Denmark-Olar High School football team. The cleanup campaign spanned over 15 miles of Bamberg County roadways with the success of collecting 174 bags of trash. Council expressed their gratitude to Ms. McKenzie and all of the participants involved.

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:

SouthernCarolina Alliance - Monthly Report

SouthernCarolina Alliance Project Manager Garrett Dragano stated that there are currently 15 active projects in Bamberg County, with nine site visits from 37 project proposals. Mr. Dragano informed that Bamberg County could possibly be securing two projects, namely, Project Canvas, which could make a \$400,000 investment and create 80 jobs and Project Superior, which could invest \$1.5 million and create 25 jobs. Council thanked Mr. Dragano for his appearance and enlightening them on business activities involving Bamberg County.

Bamberg County Treasurer - Monthly Report

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported for the month of September. The county had \$803,095.15 in income and the expenditures were \$712,086.67 leaving a positive balance of \$91,008.48. After adding the negative bank balance at the end of August (\$237,711.30) was added, the county’s regular account stood at a negative \$146,702.82. 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 \$1,009,991, at the end of September. Expenditures stood at \$1,059,287, for a negative general fund balance of \$549,296.

Mr. Thomas said all departments are continuing to operate within their budgets. This report was received as information.

Bamberg County Finance - Monthly Report

Controller Gina Smith expounded on Treasurer Alice Johnson's report that her report was only the cash balance for one of the county's bank accounts. The county has other bank accounts with money in them and Bamberg County is not short. The county's cash balance from September 2020 compared to September 2019 showed an increase of \$596,820. There was a \$500,000 transfer of funds from the American Rescue Plan funds to the general fund. A portion of the funds allowed use of those funds to replace lost revenues that counties experienced during the pandemic. Controller Smith further stated that during the months of December and January, we have to have a fund balance on hand, which we do have. All counties have cash or fund balances which they use to pay their bills and to make payroll during the first six months of the year.

Bamberg County Administrator – Monthly Report

Administrator Preston reported on the COVID-19 figures. Bamberg County has reported that 60.8 percent of Bamberg County residents have had at least one COVID-19 vaccination. Fifty-four percent have completed vaccination, up from 58.7 percent in August. Bamberg County have 50 percent of eligible residents vaccinated. Administrator Preston stated that the county's first fire service banquet will be held 6 p.m., Saturday, November 13, at the Andrew Jackson Academy gymnasium. Also acknowledged at the banquet will be Bamberg County Fire Coordinator Paul Eubanks for 33 years of service with the U.S. Air Force Reserve. Others will be recognized during the banquet as well. This report was received as information.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved first reading in title only to a proposed ordinance to adopt a redistricting plan for Bamberg County, South Carolina, following and based on the 2020 Census; and other matters related thereto. Administrator Preston reminded council that each of them had previously reviewed their districts and they have changed very little. After a short discussion it was agreed to schedule second reading at a special called meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday, November 18, at the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex.

On motion by Councilman Myers, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved a resolution to amend the amended and restated master agreement for the establishment of the Quad-County Industrial Park I, Park II, and Park III dated as of May 6, 2021 by and among Allendale County, South Carolina, Bamberg County, South Carolina, Barnwell County, South Carolina and Hampton County, South Carolina, Providing for the development of certain Multi-County Industrial Parks, so as to include additional property in that portion of the parks geographically located in Hampton County, South Carolina, and other matters related thereto.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the amendment to amended and restated master agreement for the establishment of the Quad-County Industrial Park I, Park II, and Park III (EVANESCE, INC.). This is a \$17 million investment and will create 78 jobs in Hampton County.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Dr. Goodman, council approved and authorized an amendment to the installment purchase plan of finance to refinance certain indebtedness and finance the renovation of the historic courthouse; and other related matters. Voting in favor of the plan of finance for the historic courthouse: Council Chairman Haynes, Councilman Donaldson, Dr. Goodman and Councilman

November 1, 2021....continued

Comer. Voting not in favor of the plan of finance for refinancing for certain indebtedness for the historic courthouse: Councilwoman Hammond, Councilman Myers, and Councilman Carter.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Carter, the calendar of events was accepted after adding November 18th special called meeting as agreed.

Chairman Haynes called for public comments. Administrator Preston read comments from county resident Miriam Beard that had been submitted by email on the county's website. Areas of concern - 1) Bamberg County Airport; and 2) Animal Control. Ms. Sue Clayton and Ms. Sharon Carter appeared before council to make additional comments of concern.

Council members made various comments to include a few: thanking the staff for their hard work; to stay safe and continue wearing their masks, get your COVID-19 vaccines, continue to pray and Happy Thanksgiving to all.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council voted to adjourn at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, Clerk to Council