

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., November 4, 2019 in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard, Reverend Isaiah Odom, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr., Larry Haynes and Clint Carter (*arrived 6:47 p.m.*). **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Dionne Gleaton, Jerry Halmon, Gina Smith, Kay Clary, Ken Ahlin, Jeanette Driggers, Clarence McMillan, Carrie McMillan, Nina Haynes, Judy Sandifer, Nancy Foster, Ruthie Brown, Roger Hughes, Bob Smoak, Ed Darnell, Rosa Verner, Dave Clayton, Robert Thomas, Gail Ellis, Danny Black, Norris Williams, Mary Tilton, Kay Maxwell, John Gleaton and approximately 10 additional people.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard at 6:30 p.m., in the Chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. Invocation was rendered by Reverend Isaiah Odom, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Joe Guess, Jr.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the minutes from the October 7, 2019 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved the agenda as submitted. After the approval of the agenda, Councilman Comer requested that public comments be moved and placed as a public presentation item. Another motion was then made by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Haynes, to move public comments from the end of the agenda and placed under public presentations.

Bamberg Mayor Nancy Foster presented the three nominees for the 2019 Waddy Thompson Citizen of the Year Award. Mayor Foster noted the award will be presented at the Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce Banquet on Thursday, November 14, at 6 p.m. at the Bamberg City Civic Center. Nominees for 2019 are Bamberg County Sheriff Ed Darnell, the third longest serving active sheriff in the nation; Robert Thomas, executive director of Southeastern Housing and Community Development; and Bob Smoak, a radio announcer in Bamberg. The Council wished the three nominees well.

At this time, Chairman Kinard recognized the public that had signed up prior the beginning of the meeting to make public comments. Six citizens signed in at the beginning of the meeting to make public comments. Citizens speaking were: Gail Ellis (concerned about a 350 pickup supposedly owned by Bamberg County); Jeanette Driggers (concerned about Keep Bamberg County Beautiful pickups); Judy Sandifer (decided to hold comments until another meeting); Ken Ahlin (follow the law and the county ordinances); John Gleaton (people cannot pay the high taxes); and Dave Clayton (complained about the high property taxes); The council took all concerns under advisement.

Southern Carolina Alliance President Danny Black informed Council that in preparation of the transfer of real property from Bamberg County to Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance, one parcel was neglected to be included and it is being requested that the necessary actions be taken, by ordinance, for correction. The members of Council concurred with the request from President Black.

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On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved first reading to a proposed ordinance authorizing the transfer of certain real property from Bamberg County to Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance and other related matters.

Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce Director Jerry Bell gave an update on the upcoming events for Bamberg County. All were reminded of the upcoming Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet. Other events were discussed and flyers were distributed to the audience and all present were encouraged to support the events.

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported the county's total income in September was \$208,239, with expenditures of \$670,243.

Bamberg County Controller Gina Smith reported that Treasurer Johnson reports on one of the county's bank accounts. Whereas, one account may show a negative balance, other accounts have seen increases, such as the county's capital reserve, fire service and E 911 tariff funds. When viewing the accounts, you have to view the whole picture.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the county's total revenue collected in September \$1,112,581 with expenditures of \$1,574,215 from the general fund department. All departments are continuing to operate within their budgets.

Bamberg County Auditor Rosa Verner gave an update on services provided by her office. The citizens were extended an invitation to stop by for any needed clarifications. Also, they were reminded about Homestead Exemption for those who qualify. Auditor Verner gave recognition and thanks to former Auditor Margaret Meyer for assisting her with a smooth transition with her new position.

Administrator Preston reported on several projects regarding Bamberg County's involvement. 1) Appointment of a committee by the Department of Natural Resources to develop a regional water plan for the Edisto River Basin. Their first meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 18, at Clemson University's Edisto Research and Education Center in Blackville at 6 p.m.; 2) C-Fund Committee will meet Wednesday, November 6 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers; 3) TAC Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 19 at the John Ford Community Center in St. Matthews; 4) LSCOG is sponsoring a Legislative Breakfast in Orangeburg, December 9 at 8 a.m.; 5) The deadline to submit bills in the House is November 20. Rep. Bamberg has introduced a bill that involves broadband and requested that we review it. Bamberg County is pursuing a \$2.5 million grant from the USDA and expect to hear back from them soon and Department of Commerce has agreed to pay the matching portion for Bamberg County; 6) Three new fire trucks were dedicated Tuesday, October 29 with approximately 100 people in attendance. A new fire truck is needed for the Edisto area and that issue is being checked on; 7) Improvement planning for downtown Bamberg is in progress, and also improvements for the Ness Complex. It is the vision that we can host outside tournaments for softball and Little League Baseball at the complex. President Dr. Christopher Hall of Denmark Tech is working closely with Bamberg County and the City of Bamberg to create overflow fields, so that extra fields for a tournament to play in your community are there. Helping to make this plan a reality, Council Chairman Kinard did not accept a salary for his first few years on council and some of the money was allocated to playgrounds and other infrastructure in the community. The downtown redevelopment plan shows what the city wants to do in the county seat as far as redevelopment. Lower Savannah COG has assisted in securing the services of Stantec Consulting Services for the redevelopment project; 8) With the assistance of Sen. Brad Hutto's office, lines have been moved and buried on the Veterans Memorial Walk. The security system is being installed. Sen. Tim Scott made an important call to help assist Bamberg County

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and the City of Bamberg; and 9) There is still interest in having a Flight School located at Denmark Tech. Since Denmark Tech has been a Tech School they have been underfunded every year. Denmark Tech is looking to provide programs for linemen; 10) Proposals are being accepted for fire substation until Wednesday, December 4. Administrator Preston's report was accepted as information.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) -Board meeting, Oct 22 in Hampton. Nov. 7, event at Sweetwater in Barnwell.
- 2) LSCOG -Executive Meeting on Thursday, November 14.
- 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) -Meeting Tuesday, 10 a.m., November 19th in Calhoun County.
- 4) LSCOG Housing Consortium -Meeting scheduled for November 22.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council gave second reading to a proposed ordinance to grant an easement to Rockland Industries, Inc., across Industrial Drive for the installation of a domestic water line.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved first reading of a proposed ordinance authorizing the transfer of certain real property from Bamberg County to Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance and other related matters.

The members of the Council approved the calendar of events after additional two additional events to the calendar.

Chairman Kinard called for comments from the Council. The public was thanked for attending the meeting and voicing their concerns. The news media had no comments or concerns.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council adjourned at 8:31 p.m. from the public session to enter in executive session to discuss a legal matter. No action taken during executive session.

There being no further business for discussion, the council was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC