

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., October 7, 2019 in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard (arrived at 8:50 p.m.), Reverend Isaiah Odom, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr. and Larry Haynes. **Absent:** Councilman Clint Carter. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Dionne Gleaton, Jerry Halmon, Gina Smith, Kay Maxwell, Gayle Preston, Alice Johnson, William Molnar, Clarence McMillan, Danny Singleton, Costina Leby, Janie Johnson, Patricia Harley, Jeanette Driggers, Charles Breland, Mrs. Breland, Detra' Bruce, Cynthia, Ron Turner, Dean Fralix, Ed Darnell Don Kirby, Jerry Bell, Arthur Brabham, Roger Hughes, Dave Clayton, Danny Black, Ms. Murdaugh, Ruthie Brown, Melissa Quattlebaum, Greg Shore, Josh Shore, Carol Ann Bunch, Judy Sandifer, Tony Duncan, Ken Ahlin, Alex Ahlin, John Gleaton, Peggy Gleaton, Lynn Brunson, Gail Ellis, Betty Singleton, Rufus Jamison, Rhonda Brummel, Susan Carter, Sue Clayton, Claire Hall, Mary Tilton, Don Kirby, Bill Johnson, Ben Hay and approximately 15 additional people.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Vice Chairwoman Sharon Hammond at 6:30 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 Councilman Larry Haynes.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved the minutes from the September 9, 2019 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, 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 Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Guess, to move public comments from the end of the agenda and placed under public presentations.

The members of Council listened to a positive marketing presentation of Bamberg County from Aiken based Alison South Marketing, SCA Vice President of Marketing Kay Maxwell and SCA President Danny Black. Ms. Maxwell reminded everyone of the major encounters experienced over the last 18 months to include a massive fire in downtown Bamberg that demolished some of the buildings, bankruptcy of some retail chains, the closing of a grocery store and some undesirable dialogue of the water system in Denmark. By way of getting the message through, Southern Carolina Alliance is to emphasize the assets and the value and the virtues that Bamberg County holds and why so many industries do succeed here. Unfortunately, with all the commotion, sometimes it is difficult to make things happen. In addition to misfortunes SCA has since worked with the S.C. Department of Commerce on a marketing campaign. The attempt includes Alison South Marketing Group as well as leaders from throughout the county. Mr. Ron Turner, vice president of branding at Alison South, said the marketing campaign will promote the best of what the county offer. It's a collective effort that will involve everyone, including each of the county's municipalities. "We want to see people come together and be Bamberg. A power point presentation was shown how Bamberg County can be positively promoted within many areas of the county, and by giving a vibrant facelift throughout the county by painting on buildings, billboards and signs. The capturing slogan is "BE BAMBERG". SCA President Danny Black said the county must work together better to solve its issues. The development of the vivid color signs

October 7, 2019....continued

and billboards will not cost Bamberg County anything. This is a project that has been taken as a region and this is the first step in that project. SCA will be going to the towns, meeting with the mayors to make sure the project is effectively communicated. This will not solve all the community's challenges, but SCA is doing their part in helping Bamberg County on resolving some of the challenges. On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council agreed to support the project for the betterment of Bamberg County.

MedShore General Manager Josh Shore stated the company is accredited through the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Service. It is one of 188 ambulance services in the world that is accredited. An off-site review is done and every three years they come on site to make sure they are meeting the gold standard in the profession. MedShore is owned by Tennessee-based Priority Ambulance, which provided emergency and non-emergency medical care in 10 states. Mr. James is the company's medical director and Dr. John Ross is the assistant medical director. They will be overseeing all medical continuous quality improvement and scope of practice. Mr. Shore stated that their county average response time is just under 12 minutes for a rural county. They are in the process of staffing a truck in Bamberg and looking to staff one in Ehrhardt. CEO Greg Shore said, "Right now we're guaranteeing two trucks and then backups from our surrounding counties. We want to try to get enough call volume data so we can decide where to post the ambulances at certain time of the day. We're trying to make sure we meet all the needs." The presentation was accepted as information.

Council Chairman Kinard, District 1, supported by the members of Council, presented Alex Ahlin, a citizen in Chairman Kinard's district, with a resolution recognizing his achievements as the 2019 USA Shooting National Junior Olympics Champion. Mr. Ahlin was praised for his accomplishments.

At this time, Vice Chairwoman Hammond opened the floor for public comments. Seventeen citizens signed in at the beginning of the meeting to make public comments. Citizens speaking were: Carol Ann Bunch (concerned about Bamberg Rescue Squad being replaced by Medshore); Jeanette Driggers (need additional parking spaces for handicapped individuals); Judy Sandifer (doesn't trust the administration); Tony Duncan (Bamberg County has been overthrown); Ken Ahlin (high taxes will drive people away); John Gleaton (people cannot pay the high taxes); Peggy Gleaton (troubled by the shameful conduct and language by some of the council...never seen taxes this high); Lynn Brunson (make sure we have ambulance coverage); Miriam Beard (lack of sincerity...cars are being registered in other counties); Melissa Quattlebaum (requesting the length of Mr. Preston's contract); Betty Singleton (concerned about the high taxes); Dave Clayton (county taxes); Rufus Jamison (requesting council meetings be moved to the big courthouse...county employees driving county vehicles home); Rhonda Brummel (council should work together with the citizens to create fiscal stability); Sue Clayton (no trust in council); Dean Fralix (debt); and Sue Carter (asked Treasurer Alice Johnson about two check being held for the Bamberg Rescue Squad). The council took all concerns under advisement.

A public hearing was given to a proposed ordinance authorizing (1) execution and delivery of an infrastructure credit agreement by and between Bamberg County, South Carolina and Pegasus Home Fashions, Inc., and one or more existing or to-be-formed or acquired subsidiaries, or affiliated or related entities, to provide for certain special source revenue credits for the benefit of a project that Pegasus Home Fashions, Inc. may pursue in the county; (2) the inclusion of said project in a multi-county business or industrial park; (3) the transfer of certain real property from Bamberg County to Southern Carolina Alliance; and (4) other related matters. Several comments were made referencing the possibility of 132 jobs to be provided by Pegasus Home Fashions, Inc.

Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce Director Jerry Bell gave an update on the upcoming events for Bamberg County. Sheriff Ed Darnell, Bob Smoak and Robert Thomas are the nominees for Bamberg

October 7, 2019....continued

County Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Award. 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 August was \$487,282, with expenditures of \$820,866. Property tax notices have been mailed and additional revenue is expected.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the county's total revenue collected in August was \$916,142 with expenditures of \$1,039,143 from the general fund department. All departments are continuing to operate within their budgets.

Administrator Preston reported on several projects regarding Bamberg County's involvement. Construction on Dally Road was scheduled to begin today, and if they did not begin today, it will later during this week. Scheduled for Wednesday, November 6, 2019, the C-Fund Committee will be meeting. The C-Fund Committee completed a transportation plan for Bamberg County. A new system was implemented through which citizens can petition for road improvements in the county. Petition forms can be picked up at in the Tax Assessor's office, complete it and return it to the county. The county will screen it to see if they want the road paved, or if they want to have something else done to it. The forms can be filtered that way, then presented to the committee. Also, Fire Truck dedication is scheduled for Tuesday, October 29th at 10:30 a.m. Administrator Preston is working on securing a new fire truck for the Edisto Fire Department. The U.S. Census 2020 is approaching and we want to be certain that everyone in the county is counted. A meeting, S.C. for the Count, has been scheduled for Monday, October 14, 2019 in Columbia. Bamberg County will be represented at the S.C. for the Count Creative Workshop to be held on October 29. Bobcat Landing has received a commitment to be resurfaced while the new bridge is being constructed. Administrator Preston's report was accepted as information.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) -No report
- 2) LSCOG -Meeting on Thursday, October 10th in Allendale.
- 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) -Meeting Tuesday, 10 a.m., November 19th in Calhoun County.
- 4) LSCOG Housing Consortium -Met 9/18 – No money is available and they are under restraints
Only eight projects were approved and four fell through.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Guess, council unanimously approved third and final reading of a proposed ordinance authorizing (1) execution and delivery of an infrastructure credit agreement by and between Bamberg County, South Carolina and Pegasus Home Fashions, Inc., and one or more existing or to-be-formed or acquired subsidiaries, or affiliated or related entities, to provide for certain special source revenue credits for the benefit of a project that Pegasus Home Fashions, Inc. may pursue in the county; (2) the inclusion of said project in a multi-county business or industrial park; (3) the transfer of certain real property from Bamberg County to Southern Carolina Alliance; and (4) other related matters.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council gave first 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 Guess, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved a resolution recognizing October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved a resolution recognizing October 2019 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

October 7, 2019....continued

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Kinard, the calendar of events was approved after adding additional events.

Vice Chairman Hammond called for comments from the Council. The public was thanked for attending the meeting and voicing their concerns. Administrator Preston was commended for his ability to lift the county out of the \$2 million debt that the county was in and knowing where to seek for other funding. Council declared their support of Administrator Preston for his guidance, leadership and management. An added comment was made by Council that they as council members present themselves before the citizens as good stewards and they are doing what they think is right for Bamberg County. Vice Chairman Hammond said, "We need to start anew and BE Bamberg – and we have got to work together".

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC