

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

- October 5, 2015

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*, Bamberg County Library, Bamberg County Website, 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 5, 2015, in the courtroom of the Bamberg County Courthouse. **Present:** Chairman Joe Guess, Jr., Councilwoman Alzena Robinson, Councilmen Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Clint Carter, Larry Haynes and Rev. Isaiah Odom. **Others Present:** Administrator Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Dionne Gleaton, Jerry Halmon, Kell Anderson, Mallory Biering, Jerry Bell, Ed Darnell, Alice Johnson, Gina Smith, Mr. Lennon Folk, Mrs. Folk and Robert Crosby.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Joe Guess at 6:30 p.m., in the Bamberg County Courtroom. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Clint Carter, Reverend Isaiah Odom, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Larry Haynes.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the minutes from the September 14, 2015 meeting minutes with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Rev. Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the agenda after rescheduling the introduction of Dr. William Molnar, from Lower Savannah COG and postponement of presentation of check from Palmetto Pride to the Andrew Jackson Academy .

Public hearing was given to an ordinance amending the Bamberg County Code of Ordinances in certain limited regards and particulars pertaining to Litter Officers and Code Enforcement Officers of the County and Uniform Ordinance Summons; and other matters related thereto. Administrator Preston said that with the passing of this ordinance, it would allow the county to send the litter officers to the state police academy to receive certification as Class 3 officers. No public comments were made.

Council heard a report from Kell Anderson, SouthernCarolina Alliance project manager, that the alliance is working on several projects. Project Green – Currently, the company is working through final items pursuant to closing on the property and looking to make a public announcement in the near future. Project Cowboy - , which could bring 137 jobs and a \$9.45 million capital investment to the county. It's hopeful the initial application process will be completed by the third week of October. Other projects mentioned were: Project Fatback, Project West, Project Thunderball, Project Worth, Project Max, Project Royale, Project Riker and Project Crumb. Solar Prospects: Currently they are speaking with two companies that may have an interest in installing solar farms in Bamberg County. Although no full time jobs would be created as a result, the farms' capital investment would range between 5 and 10 million in personal property and equipment.

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Product Development: CrossRhodes Speculative Building – Concrete walls and front façade are nearing a point of completion. Providing favorable weather conditions, they anticipated construction to be complete by the end of the year. The building has been submitted to State project managers and they have submitted the property to a number of prospects. Councilman Kinard questioned Mr. Anderson about the projects he reported on and wanted to know how many jobs have we gotten compared to Allendale, Jasper and the other remaining counties. Mr. Anderson was asked to bring proof at the next council meeting that the projects he reported on exists. Councilwoman Robinson stated that three council members are on the SCA Board and they would not allow false information to be presented to them. Mr. Anderson is expected to present detailed information to council regarding project existence at its next meeting.

Jerry Bell, Executive Director of the Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce, reported on upcoming events and passed out flyers for upcoming events. The 49th annual Chamber Banquet will be held on Thursday, November 5, 6:00 p.m., at Ehrhardt Fire Department. Banquet tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at the town halls in Bamberg County, ordered online and from chamber board members. All were invited to attend. Mr. Bell introduced Rev. Robert Crosby and Mr. Lennon Folk as potential candidates for the Waddy Thompson Award. Mr. Hallman Sease was not present but is the third candidate vying for the award.

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported that Bamberg County's total income for July was at a negative \$110,420.87. Returned checks totaled \$783.00, expenses came in at \$654,354.91, leaving the county with \$764,775.

Finance Director Thomas reported the county's general fund generated \$6.5 million in year-to-date revenue as of the end July. Expenditures stood at \$340,334. Budgeted revenues for Landfill/Solid Waste Department are \$1,215,479. We have collected, through July, \$22,756 representing 2% of the annual budget. On the expenditure side the department has spent 9% of its budget with the bulk of those expenditures relating to the first quarter payments for solid waste contract fees. Overall, all departments are operating within budget and within expected bounds. The council received this report as information.

Administrator Preston informed the Council of the receipt of \$240,000 rural infrastructure grant fund grant from the state for Jenior Energy LLC, previously known as Project Green. EOC had a meeting on October 2 to assess the roads and drainage. Allendale County loaned us some barricades to block off areas that were impassible. Several Council members toured Blanchard Machinery (Caterpillar Equipment) in Columbia, to look at various heavy equipment for the consideration of purchase for much needed equipment for our public works department. Council was asked to schedule a special called meeting for Monday, October 12, at 6:30 p.m. to consider a resolution for the purchase of the heavy equipment. On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Carter, the meeting was successfully scheduled.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) Lower Savannah COG (Carter) -Meeting scheduled for 10/8/15@ 6:30 p.m. in Denmark at Voorhees College. All were invited to attend.

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- 2) LSCOG (TAC) (Kinard) -The Denmark Project is still on schedule...hopefully will be completed by October or November 2015.
 - 3) SCA (Odom) -Thanked SCA for trying to get industries to come to Bamberg County. Next meeting is scheduled for 11/23/15.
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On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council gave third reading to an ordinance amending the Bamberg County Code of Ordinances in certain limited regards and particulars pertaining to litter officers and code enforcement officers of the county and uniform ordinance summons; and other matters related thereto.

On motion by Councilman Odom, seconded by Council Comer, council approved a proposed resolution to provide for the commissioning of certain named Code Enforcement Officers to provide for the proper security, general welfare, and convenience of the county of Bamberg, South Carolina; and other matters related thereto.

Council considered a proposed resolution requesting the Bamberg County Legislative Delegation to reappoint the Bamberg County Transportation Committee; and other matters relating thereto. The council discussed that the word *reappoint* that is in the resolution's title be replaced with the words *consider restructuring*. Councilman Kinard had great concern for the present committee not meeting in a timely manner because lack of a quorum from the three persons committee. Because of the bad condition of the county roads and the committee not being proficient in getting and approving bids for the needed road work, introduced a need for presentation of this resolution. Councilwoman Robinson said that it was the obligation of the Legislative Delegation to appoint a Transportation Committee and she did not think the Council should have to do the delegation's job. On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Kinard, the resolution failed. Voting in opposition of this resolution: Rev. Odom, Councilwoman Robinson, Councilmen Comer and Haynes. Voting in favor of the resolution: Councilmen Guess, Carter and Kinard.

On motion by Rev. Odom, seconded by Councilman Carter, council approved a resolution at the request of Councilwoman Robinson, to express profound sorrow of the members of the Bamberg County Council upon the passing of county resident Ms. Essie M. Carroll.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Comer, the calendar of events was approved after adding the special called meeting for Monday, October 12, 2015.

At this time, Chairman Guess called for public comments. No public comments were made.

Chairman Guess called for comments from the council and news media.

Haynes: Thanked Administrator Preston and everyone else for their hard work.

Kinard: Thanked the staff for doing a great job. Councilman Kinard restated his dissatisfaction of the Transportation Committee's meeting habits. Meetings have been unable to convene because of poor attendance. Meeting would be scheduled and then there would be no shows, with last minute or no notification. The

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Transportation Committee is charged/directed to handle the disbursement of c- funds for Bamberg County for the improvement of road paving, etc. Something needs to be done with the committee's accountability and he is tired of business not being conducted.

Carter: Thanked the employees and staff for their hard work.

Robinson: Asked council to consider meeting with the legislative delegation on a quarterly basis. Possibly should meet shortly before the legislature go into session.

Guess: Thanked the finance department for the job they had done.

No comments were made from the media.

On motion by Rev. Odom, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, council voted to enter in executive session to discuss a legal matter (Bamberg County Bonding). After a brief discussion the council entered back in open session to pass a resolution giving the Bamberg County Facilities Corporation permission to go forth with seeking a lower interest rate for the purchase of the bonds.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Council Kinard, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC