

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

- March 2, 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., March 2, 2015, in the courtroom of the Bamberg County Courthouse. **Present:** Chairman Joe Guess, Jr., , Councilmen Larry Haynes, Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Clint Carter, and Rev. Isaiah Odom. **Absent:** Councilwoman Alzena Robinson **Others Present:** Administrator Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Alison Hood, Jerry Halmon, Alice Johnson, Gina Smith, Jerry Bell, Kell Anderson, Sarah G. Noel, Dionne Gleaton, Bill Johnson, Martha Guess, Ed Darnell, Kay Clary, Bob Clary and Carmen Clary.

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 Trent Kinard, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Clint Carter.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved the minutes from the February 2, 2015 meeting after Councilman Kinard requested that Councilwoman Robinson's statement regarding reappointment to the SCA Board be included in the February record.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Carter, council approved the agenda as submitted.

Council honored Mr. Bob Clary with a framed resolution recognizing his many contributions to Bamberg County. Mr. Clary was a longtime high school sports radio announcer and Bamberg Board of Public Works Commissioner. He was well known for establishing the Bob Clary Christmas Fund, which raised in excess of \$200,000 for needy families and organizations. His wife Carmen Clary, along with his daughter Kay Clary, witnessed the presentation. Mr. Clary humbly thanked the Council for the distinct honor.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilman Carter, council agreed since House Representative Justin Bamberg had not yet arrived, to move his State of Affairs Address farther down the agenda until he arrives.

Kell Anderson, project manager with Southern Carolina Alliance, reported the alliance is working on several projects including one which could bring 137 jobs and a \$9.45 million (Project Cowboy), in capital investments. Other projects mentioned: Project Green, Project Thunderball and Project Sweet. He further stated a workforce development meeting with regional Technical Schools, Vocational Schools and major automotive dealership service managers is scheduled for March 2. The purpose is to examine the current and future needs for a pipeline of trained automotive technicians. Presentations highlighting current and future career

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opportunities in manufacturing in our area were made to Denmark-Olar students on February 26. The theme was that rewarding and well paying careers are available in manufacturing right here close to home.

Jerry Bell, Executive Director of the Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce, reported on upcoming events, including the Arts Council's event. All were encouraged to visit the Hometown Teams exhibit. Flyers were available for all present.

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported that Bamberg County had a total income of \$2,515,475 for January, with total expenses at \$585,005 more than what the county netted in year-to-date collections in January of last year. Total expenses were \$725,000.

Finance Director Thomas and Controller Smith reported the county's general fund had generated \$5,224,796 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of January. Expenditures stood at \$3.1 million. The county collected \$624,790 year-to-date in its special revenue fund, which consists of the county's E-911, road maintenance and rural fire service funds. Year-to-date expenditures stood at \$439,233. The county collected \$693,834 year-to-date in the enterprise fund, which consists of solid waste funds. Year-to-date expenditures stood at \$624,476. An assertive effort to collect past due landfill tipping fees has been profitable, with year-to-date fee collection standing at \$284,772 – representing 77 percent of the annual budget of \$370,000. Last year's collection was \$213,021. Councilman Carted questioned a figure given regarding solid waste. Controller Smith will check/correct the numbers. An increase in fees paid to the Three Rivers Solid Waste Authority is impacting the budget as the tonnage sent to the facility from the county is increasing, reversing a trend of decreased tonnage from the past few years. Finance Director Thomas and Controller Smith are carefully continuing to watch all expenditures in this department.

Administrator Preston informed the Council of the 2015 Planning Retreat scheduled for Friday, March 6 at 9:00 a.m., with Dennis Lambries serving as the facilitator. Received word on Thursday, February 26, that Bamberg County received a \$1.2 million federal grant from the Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP). The NIP is designed to stabilize property values by removing and "greening" vacant properties, with funding targeting residential demolition. Mr. Preston thanked Building Inspector Bill Johnson and IT Robert Corlin for their assistance. This money will also, help clean up several properties across the county, It will pay for title searches and delinquent taxes that are owed on property, along with demolition and clean up costs. The C-Fund Committee approved \$111,000 in matching funds, which the county can use toward the receipt of a state Department of Transportation grant. We will not have to come up with the complete \$460,000. The grant would be used to make paving improvements around the courthouse and new courthouse annex building, among other enhancements. report for Bamberg County's road inventory has been received. It was also reported that Keep America Beautiful (KAB) has already had 2 meetings. Design for the Ehrhardt Project to be done by the end of this month. They have received an 80% grant and other grants may be available for the sidewalks. The Tourism and Recreation Committee will meet with representatives from Park, Recreation and Tourism (PRT) on Tuesday, March 10. The FY 2013-2014 Audit has been completed and the auditors will be here to present it on March 10 at 5 p.m.

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REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) Lower Savannah COG -Meeting was held in Allendale at the Brandt Building. Talked about Workforce Development Director is retiring.
- 2) SCA -Meeting to be held in Hampton.
- 3) LSCOG (TAC) -Asking for SC Hwy. 78 to be repaved – there are potholes Already in the pavement. Will find out status by next Council meeting.
- 4) LSCOG Housing Consortium -There is an upcoming meeting and Mr. Guess is planning to attend.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, council approved second reading, in title only, an ordinance seeking to reaffirm the six county region of the Lower Savannah Workforce Investment Area.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, council approved second reading, in title only, a proposed ordinance identifying and designating certain roads in Bamberg County as county roads; accepting such roads into the Bamberg County Road System; and other matters related thereto. Mr. Ryan Slattery of Alliance Engineering, previously presented council with a road inventory and assessment report which will be used to develop the roadway ordinance.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved drafting a resolution to express profound sorrow of the members of the Bamberg County Council upon the passing of Mr. Ezra Lee Steward, and to extend the deepest sympathy to his family and many friends, noting his community service.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, council approved drafting a resolution to recognize Bamberg County Citizen Bob Clary of Bamberg for his contributions to the county.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved the calendar of events after adding the special meeting to review the FY 2013-2014 Audit on March 10, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilman Carter, council accepted a letter from Dr. Leonard McIntyre, President of Denmark-Technical College, regarding the opening of the back gate to the college. Councilman Kinard stated he would like to thank Denmark-Tech for keeping their word concerning the opening of the gate from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. daily. A copy of the letter will be placed with the March 2, 2015 minutes.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the appointment of the Bamberg County Council 2015 Standing Committees along with the

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appropriate name change of the heading of each committee.

Administrative/Finance – *Joe Guess, Jr., chairman, Larry Haynes and Isaiah Odom;*

Personnel/Education, Recreation, Health & Welfare/Intergovernmental Relations – *Evert Comer, Jr., chairman, Trent Kinard and Joe Guess, Jr.;*

Public Service/County Planning – *Isaiah Odom, chairman, Clint Carter and Trent Kinard;*

Justice and Public Safety – *Alzena Robinson, chairman, Larry Haynes and Clint Carter;*

Solid Waste/Recycling – *Clint Carter, chairman, Larry Haynes and Isaiah.*

There were no comments from the public.

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

Carter: Thanked the employees for their hard work.

Kinard: Thanked Denmark-Tech for keeping their word and he looks forward to working with Dr. McIntyre.

Odom: Thanked everyone for their work and effort.

Guess: Thanked Jerry Bell and expressed his enjoyment of the concert.

There being no further discussion of business, on motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Comer, council agreed to adjourn at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC