

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

- September 12, 2016

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., September 12, 2016, in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Rev. Isaiah Odom, Councilmen Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr., Clint Carter and Councilman Larry Haynes. **Others Present:** Administrator Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Dionne Gleaton, Jerry Halmon, Gina Smith, Ruthie Brown, Mallory Biering, Alice Johnson, Detra Bruce, Sharon Hammond, Sharon Williams, Sarah Noel, Ed Darnell, Lamont Robinson, Dorothy Robinson, Dorothy Williams, Harold Robinson, Charles Robinson, Herbert Beard, Ebony Blue, Annie Jones, Bervay Carter, Roosevelt Bryant, Justin Bamberg, Eva Manigault, Pamela Williams, Elizabeth Moody, Bill Johnson, Robert Corlin and approximately ten additional persons.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Isaiah Odom 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 Joe Guess, Jr.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved the minutes from the August 8, 2016 meeting after a correction was stated by Councilman Guess, that in his consortium report he reported their next meeting was scheduled for September 15 and not as printed in the minutes that read September 1, 2016. Council Clerk Shepherd will correct the minutes to reflect the typographical error and will replace the date September 1, 2016 with September 15, 2016.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Carter, council approved the agenda after Chairman Odom amended it to add a presentation of information to Ms. Sharon Hammond after the swearing in ceremony.

At this time, newly elected County Council member the Honorable Sharon Hammond, who will represent County Council District 2, was sworn in by Rev. Herbert Beard, associate Pastor of Royal Missionary Baptist Church of North Charleston, South Carolina. Ms. Ebony N. Blue, niece of Councilwoman Hammond held the Bible during the ceremony.

Chairman Odom along with the other members of Council welcomed Councilwoman Hammond and presented her with a copy of the Rules and Procedures for Council and a listing of the 2016 County Council Standing Committees. Councilwoman Hammond was also appointed by Chairman Odom to serve on the County Council 2016 Justice and Public Safety Committee.

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The family of the late Councilwoman Alzena Robinson was presented with a resolution honoring her service to the state of South Carolina, Bamberg County and the constituents of Bamberg County Council District 2. The resolution was received with great pride.

On behalf of the Bamberg County Council, Councilman Larry Haynes presented Mr. Roosevelt Bryant a resolution expressing outstanding community service. Mr. Bryant accepted the resolution with honor. Several members of the Bryant family were present to witness this presentation.

A public hearing was held for an ordinance establishing policies and terms for compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act in Bamberg County. No public comments were made.

No one was present from Southern Carolina Alliance to offer an update on projects. Chairman Odom announced that Kay Maxwell had surgery and was unable to attend the meeting. He commended her for the fine job she has been doing and wished for her a speedy recovery.

Jerry Bell, Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce Director was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. Previously, Mr. Bell reminded everyone at the August meeting of the Bamberg County Chamber banquet that will be taking place November 3, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. Nominees for this year are: Glenda Barton, Sandra Zorn Humphries, Nancy R. Jones and Trent Kinard. All were invited to attend.

Controller Gina Smith presented the financial report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, along with a report on the county's cash flow. Actual year-end general fund revenues totaled \$6.1 million compared to budgeted revenues of \$6.5 million. Property taxes had come in below budget by \$114,266. Controller Smith said the county had done well in managing its general fund expenditures, which finished up under budget by \$561,751. The rural fire service and road maintenance funds had very good operational years, with rural fire service revenues coming in above budget by \$51,747. The road maintenance funds came in under budget by \$71,765, the county didn't have to transfer as much from its general fund balance to make up the deficit. The county had anticipated having to transfer \$75,365. On the expenditure side, rural fire service finished under budget by \$1,334. Solid waste/landfill, the county was \$27,953 above budget in collection of its \$70 solid waste fee, but \$63,803 under budget in the collection of landfill tipping fees. We did not receive all the tonnage we assumed we would get back, but the county did not have to use any of the budgeted general fund transfer of \$192,214 to make up the deficit in the solid waste/landfill budget. The county is continuing to trim the \$2.8 million deficit its solid waste collection system had been running. The county's general fund has vastly improved in the past three years and the county is getting closer to the minimum brink for a good, unrestricted cash balance. It currently has a year-end unrestricted cash balance of \$1.9 million. Administrator Preston said, you got to remember, two or three years ago, we were \$2 million in the hold. We have come out \$3.7 million in a little less than three years. Controller Smith ended by saying for our FY '17 budget, based on this history, we expect that the general fund will have to support road maintenance by another \$78,160, and this amount was included in the budget.

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Treasurer Alice Johnson reported the county's income for June was \$646,605. Expenses came in at \$715,164, reflecting a negative balance of \$68,559. In July, the county had a total income of \$233,902. Expenses came in at \$809,788, reflecting a deficit of \$575,866.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the county's general fund had generated \$440,119 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of July. Expenditures stood at \$599,515, reflecting a negative balance of \$599,515. Mr. Thomas said, "overall, all departments are operating within budget and within expected bounds."

Administrator Preston welcomed Councilwoman Hammond, Rep. Justin Bamberg and acknowledged the large crowd for their attendance at the meeting. He informed the citizens that they would soon be able to drive up and pay their taxes. A delinquent tax sale will be held on November 7, 2016. Administrator Preston said a budget for the old courthouse building is being put together and we are in the process of trying to get USDA money for that purpose. He further informed everyone that the grand opening for the new courthouse annex will be toward the end of October or the first part of November.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

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| 1) SCA | -Next meeting scheduled to be held in St. Matthews, SC. |
| 2) Lower Savannah COG | -Meeting was held at Edisto Research Center last month in Blackville. NADO Conference to be held in Houston. |
| 3) LSCOG (TAC) (Kinard) | -Work is to begin in two weeks on the Bi-Lo Intersection. A TAC meeting is scheduled for September and what they are doing. |
| 4) LSCOG Housing Consortium | -Next meeting is scheduled for September 15, 2016 in Aiken and Councilman Guess will be attending. |
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On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Guess, council gave third reading to an ordinance establishing policies and terms for compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act in Bamberg County.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved on first reading, an ordinance restating and affirming the Bamberg county Fire Service Area, the Bamberg County Fire Service Coordinator, and the Bamberg County Fire Advisory Board; repealing and revoking all prior ordinances and resolutions inconsistent therewith' and other matters pertaining thereto.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved the calendar of events after adding a meet and greet setting for the President of Voorhees College.

The council agreed to place on the October agenda, the appointment of a representative from Bamberg County to serve on the Lower Savannah Council of Governments Board replacing Mr. Jasper Varn. Councilman Carter agreed to present a name for consideration at that time.

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On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council appointed Councilwoman Sharon Hammond to serve on the Lower Savannah Council of Governments Board of Directors replacing Ms. Alzena Robinson.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved the appointment of Councilman Evert Comer, Jr., to serve on the Southern Carolina Regional Alliance Board. Voting in favor of: Kinard, Guess, Comer and Carter. Voting not in favor of: Hammond, Haynes and Odom.

At this time, Chairman Odom called for public comments. Rep. Justin Bamberg gave extensive comments on legislative issues and matters with some impacting Bamberg County. Various topics discussed: 1) Cemeteries; 2) Fighting for LGF money; 3) Healthcare; 4) Education; 5) Rural Revitalization Plan...*will refile in December*; 6) Upgrading welding equipment and nursing equipment at Denmark Technical College, etc. Chairman Odom and the Council thanked Rep. Bamberg for his presence at the meeting.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Guess, council adjourned from the public segment of the meeting to enter in executive session to discuss a contractual matter regarding the Administrator's Contract. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC