

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, agendas for the following meeting were delivered to all members of Council, County Attorney Richard Ness, Lower Savannah COG, The Bamberg Leader, The Times and Democrat, Southern Carolina Regional Alliance, Bamberg County Library, Bamberg County Website and Bamberg County Courthouse Annex.

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In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bamberg County Council met 6:00 p.m., December 9, 2024 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside live streaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Chairman Evert Comer, Jr., Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Clint Carter, Spencer Donaldson, Phil Myers and Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II. **Absent:** Councilman Larry Haynes. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Alice Johnson, Chip Maier, Alisha Moore, Kenneth Bamberg, Donald Kirby, Paul Eubanks, Derrick Ford, Clarence Blocker, Scott Brown, Anthony Harley, Dr. Ryan Brown, Joshua Urwick, Chief Smoak, Wayne, Ryan Thorne and five additional visitors.

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Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Evert Comer, Jr., at 6:00 p.m. Invocation was rendered by Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II, followed with the pledge of allegiance led by Councilwoman Sharon Hammond.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, the minutes from the November 4, 2024 meeting were approved with necessary corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Myers, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the agenda as presented.

The receipt of two grants totaling \$12,050 was announced by CEO Ryan Thorne of Thorne EMS, Councilman Phil Myers and Administrator Joey Preston. The grants were very much appreciated. The grants have enabled the purchase of two CPR machines that will be placed and housed on two of the ambulances. These machines will be extremely helpful when CPR has to be administered to a patient. A thorough demonstration of the function of the CPR machine was given to Council and the public. Council extended gratitude to Mr. Thorne and all others involved with obtaining the grant for Bamberg County.

#### **COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:**

##### **Southern Carolina Development Alliance - Monthly Report**

Project Director Joshua Urwick reported that SCA had two site visits in Bamberg County since the last council meeting. Mr. Urwick stated that hopefully he will have additional information on industries at the next meeting. It is the end of the year and things are a little slow and hopefully things will increase the beginning of the year. Council thanked Mr. Urwick for his report.

##### **Bamberg County Treasurer – Monthly Report**

County Treasurer Alice Johnson gave the financial report, stating that the balance of the county's regular account stood at a negative \$1,055,756.66 at the end of September. This report was accepted as information.

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**Bamberg County Finance – Monthly Report**

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund had year-to-date revenues of \$2,062,282. Expenditures stood at \$2,368,220, leaving a negative balance of \$305,938. This report was received as information.

**Bamberg County Controller – Monthly Report**

Controller Gina Smith responded to Treasurer Johnson’s report by saying that the negative balance is close the same amount that we normally experience this time of the year and it is normal for county government. All other accounts are looking good. The capital reserve fund is down a little, mainly because we have some heavy equipment payments that are coming due this time of the year, and this is also the time when property taxes are beginning to be paid. This report was accepted as information.

**Bamberg County Administrator – Monthly Report**

Administrator Preston reported that: 1) The courthouse roof project should be completed by the end of February; 2) Preparing for pre-construction meeting January 7, 2025 at 11 a.m.; 3) Pre-construction conference at 11 a.m. January 7, 2025 regarding the old council building and Little Swamp Community Center; 4) Ribbon Cutting for Holmans Bridge Fire Department will take place on Friday, December 13, 2024 @ 12 p.m.; 5) Ground breaking for Water Tower was held in November; 6) Cyber Training for employees is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10 @ 10 a.m. in the Council Chambers; 7) C-Fund Committee allocated \$1.5m to repair Carver Road, Macedonia Church Road and Riley Road; and 8) Waste Water Treatment Road in Denmark is going to be graveled. This report was received as information.

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On motion by Councilman Myers, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council passed a resolution (sponsored by Councilman Myers), recognizing the heroic efforts of the Clearpond Fire Department in saving two lives during a vehicle accident.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council passed a resolution honoring Dr. Ryan Brown of Clearpond Fire Department and naming him an ambassador of Bamberg County.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved the calendar of events.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond, seconded by Councilman Carter, council voted and agreed to the re-appointment of Councilman Larry Haynes to the SouthernCarolina Alliance Board of Directors as a representative from Bamberg County Council.

Denmark resident Rev. Clarence Blocker thanked Administrator Preston and the council for the work done on Riley Drive. With the excessive rain and bad weather we have had, the road was damaged again. The C-Fund Committee has approved funds for improvements and reinforcement for the road.

At this time, Chairman Comer asked for comments from council. Council thanked the public for attending and Administrator Preston and his staff were acknowledged for their hard work. All were

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wished a Merry Christmas and a safe holiday season. There being no further business for discussion Chairman Comer asked Councilman Carter for a closing prayer and on motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Myers, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC