

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*, SouthernCarolina 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., January 6, 2020 in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard, Reverend Isaiah Odom, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr., Larry Haynes and Clint Carter (*arrived 6:50 p.m.*). **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Shakora Bamberg, Gina Smith, Gail Ellis, Josh Shore, Jeanette Driggers, Eddie Williams, Alice Johnson, Mary Tilton Donald Parler, Ruthie Brown, Kay Clary, Michael Kroll, Dave Clayton, Sue Clayton, Dean Fralix, Donald Kirby, Jerry Bell and approximately 10 additional people.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard at 6:30 p.m., in the Chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. Invocation was rendered by Reverend Isaiah Odom, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Larry Haynes.

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved the minutes from December 2, 2019 and December 30, 2019 meetings with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the agenda as submitted.

The order of the agenda was changing of the gavel from past Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard to the new Chairman for 2020 Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Council District #2.

Consideration of selection of vice-chairman by district rotation as set forth by Bamberg County Council Policy was followed. On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved the appointment of Councilman Larry Haynes, Council District #3 to serve as Vice Chairman for the year 2020.

Chairwoman Hammond presented a service plaque to past county council chairman Kerry Trent Kinard, for service rendered while serving as chairman to Bamberg County Council from January 1, 2019 until December 31, 2019.

Mr. Josh Shore, a representative of MedShore, gave a quarterly report update regarding transport service for Bamberg County residents. Since October 1, 2019, they have had 774 responses with 533 of the responses having to have transport service with an average response time of 12:36. According to the national standard for rural areas which is 12:59, MedShore has succeeded in the standards. MedShore is working with the fire departments in the first responder's program by way of support through training supplies and equipment. Training will be done at Denmark-Technical College and they are expecting to begin within the first quarter of 2020. An employee from MedShore will be teaching the course. High quality workers are still being recruited. MedShore is currently proposing an internal recruiting bonus. If an internal employee tries to recruit someone as a full-time EMT, the internal employee would receive a bonus of up to \$1,000 for the recruitment. Gratitude was expressed to Mr. Shore for his presentation.

January 6, 2020....continued

Mr. Michael Kroll from the U.S. 2020 Census Bureau presented information regarding the upcoming 2020 Census. April 1 is the date for encouraging early response. Notification responses will be sent out to homes the beginning of March. There are three ways to respond to the census and they are by mail, phone or internet. Bamberg County appears to have a low response score map in the record to the census-based on population. The Census is in the process of hiring and the pay for hired persons is \$14.50 per hour for part-time and full-time positions with the pay being weekly. Applications for positions can be filled out online. Programs are already in place with updated addresses and locations. The Census has recruited at SC Works Voorhees College and Denmark Technical College. College students will be counted in their dorms. During the Census, be certain to count children that are in households under the age of 5. You may apply for jobs at census2020.gov.

Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce Director Jerry Bell gave an update on the upcoming events for Bamberg County. Also, Director Bell showed a ten minute video presentation of The Edisto River. In conclusion, the public was encouraged to support sponsored events for Bamberg County.

Bamberg County Treasurer Alice Johnson reported the county's taxes collected for November were \$1,195,964. The county portion of taxes collected for November were \$412,869. Treasurer Johnson read a letter to the Council from a taxpayer regarding high taxes. The Council requested that Ms. Johnson inform them of the manner in which she was going to respond to the taxpayer's objection.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund is \$7,963,590 in year-to-date revenues at the end of November, with expenditures of \$1,827,313. All departments are continuing to operate within their budgets.

Administrator Preston reported on the following: **1)** Renovation of old hospital – Hazardous material has been removed and once the road goes on, we will be looking to do the law enforcement building; **2)** The \$250,000 DHEC grant that has been designated for renovations, there is no match; **3)** Ethics reports are due on Monday, March 30, 2020; **4)** 80% of the cleanup downtown Bamberg has been done; **5)** The vault downtown Bamberg still needs to be removed, but special equipment will have to be rented in order to remove it; **6)** Working along with the City of Bamberg and they are working with FLC - Senator Tim Scott made a call to the IRS to help the situation along the way as it relates to the property lien; **7)** The grocery store is to open in February - 97 loads of demolition was hauled off and 5 loads of scrap metal was removed; **8)** The rear pond has been cleaned out; and **9)** We are presented waiting for a response regarding broadband. The Council accepted this report as information.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) - No report.
- 2) LSCOG - Call meeting Thursday – January 9, 2020.
- 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) - No additional information at this time.
- 4) LSCOG Housing Consortium - No pending meeting.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council approved proposed resolution C-20-1, committing the partnership of Bamberg County with the U.S. Census Bureau and the State of South Carolina for the 2020 Census.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved proposed resolution C-20-2, for the creation of the 2020 Bamberg County Complete Count Committee.

January 6, 2020....continued

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Guess, council approved proposed resolution C-20-3, establishing written public notice of Bamberg County Council meeting schedule for calendar year 2020. Meeting dates are: January 6th, February 3rd, March 2nd, April 6th, May 4th, June 1st, July 13th, August 10th, September 14th, October 5th, November 2nd and December 7th, 2020.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Comer, the members of the Council approved the calendar of events as submitted.

Chairwoman Hammond called for comments from the Council and the news media. All were thanked for attending the meeting and voicing their concerns. Looking forward to going into 2020 with a clear vision and working together with the citizens.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Comer, council adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC