

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., May 6, 2019 in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Kerry Trent Kinard, Reverend Isaiah Odom. Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Clint Carter, Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr., and Larry Haynes. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Jerry Halmon, Dionne Gleaton, Gina Smith, Alice Johnson, Kim Compton, Brad Hudson, Kay Clary, Jeanette Driggers, Gail Ellis, Ruthie Brown, Booker Patrick, Rufus Jamison, Ken Ahlin, Dean Fralix, Donna Brown, Ella Breland, Danny Black, Darrell Booker, Ella Breland, Frances Johnson, Jerry Bell, Carol Durgan, Linda Bell, Don Kirby, Ed Darnell approximately 50 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 Evert Comer, Jr.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilmen Comer and Haynes, council approved the minutes from the April 8, 2019 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Guess and Councilwoman Hammond, the agenda was approved after moving public comments to the beginning of the agenda.

At this time, Chairman Kinard opened the floor for public comments. Eight citizens signed in at the beginning of the meeting to make public comments. They were: Ken Ahlin, Jeanette Driggers, Rufus Jamison, Jessie B. Collins, Sr., John Gleaton, Kim Compton, Dean H. Fralix and Gerald Maynard. These citizens had various concerns about issues within Bamberg County. Each citizen had three minutes to express their concern.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Reverend Odom, Council approved a resolution acknowledging and thanking Jerry Bell for his service to Bamberg County while serving the Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce as a member since 2008 and director since 2013. Director Bell expressed his appreciation to council and his joy of working with the chamber. Although he is retiring, he will still be working with the chamber, but not in the capacity as director.

A public hearing was given to an amendment to the amended and restated master agreement for the establishment of the Quad-County Industrial Park I, Park II, and Park III. Project known as Can-Can, will be located in Allendale County. It was explained that Bamberg County will be the recipient of 10 percent of the tax revenues from that industry. No public comments were made.

SoutherCarolina Alliance Executive Director Danny Black, reported that they are working to expand broadband in our area. Bamberg County applied for a \$3 million grant from USDA Rural Development's Community Connect Grant Program to expand broadband access to underserved rural areas. A grant is being sought toward the allowance for a marketing team of experts that will view our Opportunity Zones and choose the one they think has the most value and the best return for the counties. Mr. Black invited

May 6, 2019....continued

members of the Concerned Citizens of Bamberg County to provide input on this matter. Bamberg is among the four counties that has been affected by low income and population loss as being down by at least 10%. SCA will be working diligently to reverse this negative outcome. In a report given by CNN news, Director Black said they reported that Bamberg County has a poisonous water system in one of their towns. Being true or not, if the media puts out that kind of information, we are in trouble. A food processing company was looking at one location in Bamberg County and with the negative CNN report, it is believed to have been the reason that company will locate to another county. SCA is still pursuing that company.

Bamberg County Chamber President Jerry Bell gave an update on upcoming events within the county. Flyers listing additional events in the community were distributed to the citizens present. Mr. Bell's update was appreciated as presented.

Treasurer Alice Johnson reported for the month of March the county had income total of \$597,492.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund had \$7,902,805 in year-to-date revenue as of the end of March. Expenditures stood at \$907, 357. All departments are continuing to operate within their budgets.

Controller Gina Smith reported on the insurance proviso regarding Bamberg County's consideration of being placed in a smaller pool for our insurance premiums for the employees. Thanks is extended to Senator Brad Hutto for moving the proviso along for Bamberg County.

Administrator Preston informed Council that a conference call concerning high speed internet is scheduled for tomorrow, May 7, 2019. Councilwoman Sharon Hammond stated that she had recently spoken with Mr. Shannon regarding information on internet service and she will give Administrator Preston his business card for contact purposes. Mr. Preston said that the Bamberg County Recreation Committee received 12 recreation grant applications out of 23 applications that had been mailed to previous groups that received grant funds for Fiscal Year 2017-2018. There were groups that received applications but did not meet the deadline for application submission. It was agreed to extend the deadline for an additional week, Monday, May 13, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. Mr. Preston continued by reporting that the C-Fund Committee is scheduled to meet in June and a progress report on Dally Road will be given at that time. Lower Savannah will be sponsoring three 2040 long-range transportation planning meetings, the public is invited. Bamberg County has been approved for a loan for a substation in the Rivers Bridge area and the setting up of the building should take place within the next 60 days. Insurance rates should decrease for those citizens living in that area. Bamberg, Barnwell, Orangeburg, and Calhoun counties won their first national award from NACo for the new Emergency Room. Also, we are waiting on the delivery of the granite before we can continue with the completion of the Veterans Memorial project. The Council accepted Administrator Preston's report as given.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) SCA (Haynes, Comer & Odom) -Councilman Haynes was appointed to a 3-year term to the SCA Board. During their meeting they discussed school consolidation in our area. They passed their new budget. It was said when people talk negatively about the county, businesses will not locate in your area.
- 2) LSCOG -Met April 11 in Calhoun County. A presentation on Tele-Medicine, etc. was given by Mr. Shannon Legree. They are pursuing a grant that will assist the rural communities in getting

May 6, 2019....continued

- connected. Reviewed the Needs Assessment that we hosted in January. A formal report will be sent to the county.
- 3) Lower Savannah COG (TAC) -Meeting schedule in Orangeburg County Annex. Discussed the widening of the shoulder between Denmark and Bamberg.
- 4) LSCOG Housing Consortium -Meeting scheduled for May 22 in Orangeburg County.
-

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved third and final reading to an amendment to amended and restated master agreement for the establishment of the Quad-County Industrial Park I, Park II, and Park III (Project Can Can).

On motion by Reverend Odom, seconded by Councilman Haynes, the calendar of events was approved after adding the TAC meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 16 at 10:00 a.m., in the Orangeburg County Annex.

Chairman Kinard called for comments from the Council. Council thanked the public for coming and invited them at all meetings. Councilman Carter requested that the County not charge for requested printed information. Councilwoman Hammond wished all the mothers that were present a happy Mother's Day.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Guess, council agreed to enter in executive session to discuss a contractual issue and a legal issue.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council enter in open session to inform the public that no actions were taken and to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, Clerk to Council