

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.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bamberg County Council met 6:00 p.m., May 6, 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 Phil Myers, Jr., Clint Carter, Larry Haynes, and Spencer Donaldson. **Absent:** Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Alisha Moore, Kenneth Bamberg, Joshua Urwick, Moses Cheatham and Donald Kirby, John Fleming, Andy O'Brien, Nancy foster, Michelle Martin, Clarence Blocker and Rosella Cooper.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Evert Comer, Jr., at 6:00 p.m. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Donaldson, followed with the pledge of allegiance led by Councilman Clint Carter.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the minutes from the April 8, 2024 regular meeting with necessary corrections should there be any.

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

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:

Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance - Monthly Report

Mr. John Fleming, Southern Carolina Alliance Director of Development thanked the Council and others for being in attendance at the ribbon cutting for Innovative Poultry Products on Tuesday, April 30th, at 10 a.m., in Olar. Director Fleming was very limited with his introduction and the discussion of details regarding Project Lightning. At this time, there are certain business aspects that cannot be discussed, but there will possibly be 250 jobs available with an investment of \$35 million. More details will be shared after third reading of the incentive package for the affiliate. Council accepted this report as information.

Bamberg County Treasurer - Monthly Report -

County Treasurer Alice Johnson gave the financial report, stating that in March the county had \$544,042.40 in income and expenditures of \$1,178,420.29, for a negative balance of \$634,377.89. When the \$1,174,338.89 bank balance at the end of February was added, the county's regular account stood at a positive \$460,455.90.

Bamberg County Budget – Monthly Report

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund had year-to-date revenues of \$7,055,571 as of the end of March. Expenditures stood at \$7,411,383, for a negative general fund balance of

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355,812. The county departments are continuing to operate within their budgets. Finance Director Thomas will update his report and resubmit. This report was received as information.

Bamberg County Administrator – Monthly Report

Administrator Preston reported to council on: 1) Downtown 301 is reopened; 2) Thankful to SCA for their hard work; 3) Meeting is scheduled for the end of the week with Bamberg Board of Public Works for multi-project water and wastewater improvements as part of the \$1.4 billion in American Rescue Plan Act funds. The project area is located in Councilman Haynes' district. This will include approximately 75 residents in the Hunters Chapel Road area and Crosswinds Road and Family Circle Drive; 4) Groundbreaking for Broadband is scheduled for May 17th at 11 a.m. at the Airport; the Legislative Caucus is scheduled for May 31st in Orangeburg and is sponsored by Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter; Thanks was given to Councilman Carter for his help in getting the flashing light pushed through for Andrew Jackson Academy; 5) Thanks was given to Deputy Administrator Thomas for his hard work toward helping with the Airport water tank grant; 6) A low bid of \$475,270 from Palmetto Site-work Services LLC had been accepted for graveling work on Lazy Lane and Salty Road, with the C-Fund Committee providing additional funding as needed. A bid opening for the McGee Street sidewalk project is scheduled for June 11; and 7) The NAACP of Bamberg County will be heading up a Juneteenth Celebration from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday, June 19, at the Bamberg County Veterans Park. Ms. Nina Haynes, Councilman Haynes wife, is heading up this event. Juneteenth is a federal holiday celebrated to commemorate the ending of slavery. Council accepted this report as information.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved an inducement resolution providing for a fee in lieu of tax agreement between Bamberg County and Project Lightning.

On motion by Councilman Myers, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved a resolution to accept late reimbursement request from Bamberg City League Baseball and Softball for 2023 Bamberg County Recreation Committee funding. Voting in favor: Council members Myers, Carter, Comer, Haynes and Donaldson. Voting not in favor: Councilwoman Hammond. Dr. Goodman was not present at the meeting.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Myers, council approved first reading – title only, a proposed ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of a fee-in-lieu of tax agreement by and among Bamberg County, South Carolina and one or more affiliates known for the time being as “Project Lightning” providing for both fee-in-lieu of ad valorem taxes and special source revenue credit incentives; providing for an amendment to the amended and restated master agreement for the establishment of the quad-county industrial Park I, Park II, and Park III dated as of May 6, 2013 by and among Allendale County, South Carolina, Bamberg County, South Carolina, Barnwell County, South Carolina, and Hampton County, South Carolina, providing for the development of certain multi-county industrial parks, so as to include additional property in that portion of the parks geographically located in Bamberg County, South Carolina; and other matters related thereto.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved first reading of an ordinance to certify the Rockland Industries property as a textile mill site under the South Carolina Textiles Communities Revitalization Act.

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On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Council Carter, council gave first reading approval in title only, to adopt the operating and capital budgets of Bamberg County for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, and to make appropriations for such Bamberg County budgets for county ordinary purposes and for other county purposes for which the county may levy a tax; to provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real estate properties in Bamberg County for such county ordinary purposes, including sufficient tax to pay the principal and interest on outstanding indebtedness of Bamberg County maturing during said fiscal year; and to provide for other matters relating to Bamberg County and Bamberg County budgetary matters, including, without limitation, certain capital expenditures and related lease-purchase financings and general obligation bonds of the county. Bamberg County Controller Gina Smith addressed council by saying we are still in the process of finalizing revenues and expenditures. The county is budgeting \$1,165,077 for health insurance next year, which is \$5,708 less than what was budgeted in this year's budget. Retirement costs will increase from \$836,127 this year to \$985,910 next year. Several other items were mentioned in the budget presentation. Additional information will be provided at the second budget reading.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Carter, approved the calendar of events after adding two additional items 1) Bamberg County Detention Center drop-in, May 8th at 1 p.m. and 2) SC Legislative Gala – Friday May 31st at 7 p.m. in Orangeburg at the Library.

Comments from the public:

- Denmark resident Rosella Cooper complained about a man who lives next door to her burning trash and other debris without properly containing the blazes. Ms. Cooper said that there is an ordinance that you can't burn within the city. It was suggested that she write a letter to the city that references the ordinance. Chairman Comer told her that the county will do whatever we are authorized to do.
- Rev. Clarence Blocker requested that the county fix the drainage issues on his road (183 Riley Drive). He has been a resident there for 26 years. Rev. Blocker was extended an invitation to the next C-Fund Committee meeting, which has not been scheduled, but should be within the next 60 days.

Chairman Comer, Jr., called for comments from council. All present were thanked for their attendance, employees were thanked for their hard work and appreciation was given to Administrator Preston and staff. Happy Mother's Day was extended to all mothers. Councilman Myers thanked the council for helping Buzzy out by passing the resolution. Councilman Donaldson requested that Under Pass Road and Cow Pie Road be looked at for the purpose of needed maintenance.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Myers, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, the meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC