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MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING - January 9, 2017

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, 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 5, 2016, in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Rev. Isaiah Odom, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Trent Kinard, Evert Comer, Jr., Joe Guess, Jr., Larry Haynes and Clint Carter. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Alice Johnson, Dionne Gleaton, Jerry Halmon, Mallory Biering, Detra Bruce, Sarah Noel, Family members of Councilman Clint Carter, Ruthie Brown, Shawn Hanks, Fredrena Odom, Mellinda Tyler, Jailyn Tyler, Ted Bonds, Gale Bonds, Deanna Miller-Berry, Kenneth Ahlin, Graham Banks, Mike Ridge and Darrell Booker.

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 Clint Carter, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilwoman Sharon Hammond.

On motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the minutes from the December 5, 2016 meeting with future corrections should there be any.

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

Re-elected Councilmen Trent Kinard (District #1) and Joe Guess, Jr. (District #4), were sworn in for their new four year term by the Honorable Probate Judge Sarah Guess Noel and the bible was held by Clerk to Council Rose R. Shepherd.

Re-elected Councilman Reverend Isaiah Odom (District #5), was sworn in for his new four year term by Clerk to Council Rose R. Shepherd and the bible was held by Ms. Jailyn Tyler, Mrs. Fredrena Odom and Mellinda Tyler. Re-elected Councilman Clint Carter (District #7), was sworn in for his new four year term by Reverend Shawn Hanks and the bible was held by family members of Councilman Carter.

Councilman Evert Comer, Jr., was inducted as council chairman for 2017, taking over from outgoing chairman Rev. Isaiah Odom, who was presented with a plaque for his service as chairman for 2016. Councilman Odom said, "It has been a privilege in serving as chairperson." Chairman Comer said he looks forward to working with council and continuing the good work that has been started.

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On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Odom, Councilman Clint Carter was selected as vice chairman for 2017, as set forth by the Bamberg County Council by district rotation.

SouthernCarolina Alliance Senior Project Manager Darrell Booker updated council about industries considering Bamberg County. Project Canopy is a Brazilian-based wood processing company. Additional information about this company should be available the first part of the second quarter. Project Leader is another wood processing company that could possibly locate in the county. Project Solar, a solar farm that is looking at Barnwell and Bamberg counties as possible location sites. There are no job coupled with this project, but it would be a capital investment, which is revenue to the county. It was requested of Mr. Booker that in the future, please submit a brief summary of his report to the council. This report was accepted as information.

Jerry Bell, Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce Director gave an update on events within the county. A flyer listing events in the community was distributed to the citizens present. As usual, Mr. Bell encouraged everyone to support the events.

Treasurer Alice Johnson reported the county's total income for November 2016 was \$615,652. Expenses came in at \$619,913.

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the county's general fund had generated \$2 million in year-to-date revenue as of the end of November. Expenditures stood at \$2.6 million. Overall, all departments are operating within budget and within expected bounds.

Controller Gina Smith presented a solid waste/landfill operations report, stating that the department had year-to-date revenue as of the end of November standing at \$368,917, an increase from the \$356,875 generated at the same time last year.

County Administrator Preston reported that the county has received \$142,000 in grant funds from Keep America Beautiful and the Keep Bamberg County Beautiful organization ended 2016 by picking up in excess of 24,000 pounds of litter from across the county. This project was successfully done with help of volunteers. Keep Bamberg County Beautiful has targeted January 15 as the completion date for the Educational Experience Park. We recently had two employees complete a course in grant writing and in the future, we will have other employees trained to write grants as well.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCIL

- 1) SCA -A retreat was held to discuss critical issues (12/1-2/16). Hopefully, SCA will continue to provide retreats as the one in December 2016.
- 2) Lower Savannah COG -Councilwoman Hammond attended the LSCOG Legislative Breakfast. Sen. Brad Hutto said at the top of the list for discussion is LGF. Rep. Lonnie Hosey talked about the burden of unfunded mandates. To be more

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successful with what we do we have to do and approach things more on a regional scale. Ms. Hammond spoke with Sen. Hutto about getting assistance with our detention center. Councilman Carter introduced the new board member, Rev. Shawn Hanks. Rev. Hanks will attend the LSCOG board meeting next month.

3) LSCOG (TAC) (Kinard)

- Reported the next TAC meeting is scheduled for January 24 @ 10 a.m. Mr. Kinard said with the road improvement (Heritage Center, Hwy. 78), we only received two curbs and a couple of stop signs. He will be requesting a breakdown for what Bamberg County received as compared to Aiken and the other counties.

On motion by Councilman Odom, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved a proposed resolution establishing written public notice of Bamberg County Council meeting schedule for calendar year 2017.

On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilman Odom, council approved the calendar of events as submitted.

At this time, Chairman Odom called for public comments. 1) Deanna White Berry: Introduced herself as a candidate running for mayor of Denmark. She promoted herself to be a participant in various organization in the county. 2) Graham Banks: Complained about litter, dumping and speeding in the Hunters Chapel area. 3) Ted Bonds, Gail Bonds and Mike Ridge: Complained about the loss of local news coverage from WIS-TV after the station was dropped by cable service provider Atlantic Broadband. Administrator Preston responded that he understands their frustration, there is little county council can do outside of drafting a resolution expressing their concerns. On motion by Councilman Kinard, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council amended the agenda and unanimously agreed that Administrator Preston and Attorney Ness prepare and send a letter along with a resolution to Atlantic Broadband addressing the concerns from the citizens.

The council thanked the administrator and employees for their hard work. Councilwoman Hammond commended the staff that received their certificates in grant writing. Also, an invitation was given to the public to attend the council meetings.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Carter, the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, Clerk to Council