

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., April 7, 2025 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside live streaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Chairwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Spencer Donaldson, Kenneth Ahlin, Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II and Larry Haynes. **Absent:** Councilwoman Michelle Martin. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Shawn Hanks, Kenneth Bamberg, Kay Maxwell, Chip Maier, Alisha Moore, Clarence Blocker and two additional visitors.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Sharon Hammond, at 6:00 p.m. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Spencer Donaldson, followed with the pledge of allegiance led by Councilman Larry Haynes.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, the minutes from the March 10, 2025 meeting were approved with necessary corrections.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved the agenda as presented.

Public Hearing was given to an ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of a special source revenue credit agreement by and between Bamberg County, South Carolina and a Company currently known to the County as Project Black Jack with respect to certain economic development property in the County, whereby such property will receive certain special source revenue credits in respect of investment in infrastructure. No public comments were made.

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:

Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance - Monthly Report

In the absence of Project Director Joshua Urwick, Kay Maxwell, Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance's vice president of marketing, stated that Black Horse Steel Works in Bamberg County was one of three industrial announcements the SCA made in its first quarter. The company is expecting to create 40 jobs and at this time they are currently hiring welders, other staff will be hired later. Ms. Maxwell further stated since the beginning of the year, they've reached out to 6,600-plus companies. It equates to 102 leads, 40 property submittals, 16 company meetings, six RFIs on 12 properties, 20 new projects and 14 new site visits. The Council received and thanked Ms. Maxwell for her report.

Bamberg County Treasurer – Monthly Report

County Treasurer Alice Johnson stated that the balance of the county's regular account stood at a negative \$669,653 at the end of November. Treasurer Johnson reported to council, the status of her battle with cancer. Council expressed their concerns and gave encouraging remarks and asked that she keep pressing through and know that they are there to support her.

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Bamberg County Finance - Monthly Report

County Finance Director T.M. Thomas gave a general fund report for December, with revenues standing at \$7,573,912. Expenses stood at \$4,940,149, leaving a positive balance of \$2,633,763. This report was accepted as information.

Bamberg County Administrator – Monthly Report

Administrator Preston reported that: 1) Bamberg County will host the LSCOG meeting on Thursday evening at the Bamberg County Airport at 6 p.m.; 2) Construction has started on the McGee Street project – construction should be completed within 30 days; 3) A portion of North Street will be resurfaced beginning from the county courthouse annex building; 4) The county is one of 12 communities in the state to receive a \$5,000 Palmetto Pride litter enforcement grant; 5) Met with Mayor Elect Harold Johnson and MUSC officials regarding Denmark hydrant and water system issues; 6) Met with Voorhees/Charter – Bamberg County will receive a pass-through grant for them; 7) Meals on Wheels Resolution will be sent to S.C. Lieutenant Governor’s Office requesting aid in sustaining funding for the Bamberg County’s Meals on Wheels project; and 8) A grant funding was obtained for the Family Circle water project to build a line and take care of the meters, but residents are going to have to pay for the line that goes from the meter to their house. Pipes will be delivered to the area, with construction to start soon after. Councilman Hayes chimed in to say that it has taken about 10 years to get to this point and he was just happy that they will be able to get clean water. This report was received as information.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council passed a resolution sponsored by Councilwoman Michelle Martin, requesting the Federal Government Preserve a functioning U.S. Post Office in the Town of Olar. The resolution stated that the U.S. Postal Service had informed Olar residents that their post office would temporarily close for repairs, with all mail needing to be dropped off at the Denmark Post Office until further notice. The resolution also stated that the council would offer the county’s support to assist Olar and any federal entities in finding a suitable location for a post office to be established in the town of Olar.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council passed a resolution sponsored by Dr. Jonathan Goodman, to recognize the Denmark-Olar Vikings as Class A State Basketball Champion and appoint them as ambassadors of Bamberg County.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council passed a resolution to request the General Assembly and the state Department of Transportation place signs announcing the Vikings’ championship win at all county entrances. Voting in favor were council members Evert Comer, Jr., Larry Haynes, Dr. Jonathan Goodman, Spencer Donaldson and Chairwoman Sharon Hammond. Voting not in favor was Councilman Ken Ahlin.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Dr. Goodman, council passed a resolution requesting the South Carolina Lieutenant Governor aid in sustaining funding for the Meals on Wheels program.

On motion by Council Haynes, seconded by Councilman Comer, council passed a resolution designating April as Fair Housing Month in Bamberg County.

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On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council gave third and final reading to an ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of a special source revenue credit agreement by and between Bamberg County, South Carolina and a Company currently known to the County as Project Black Jack with respect to certain economic development property in the County, whereby such property will receive certain special source revenue credits in respect of investment in infrastructure. This agreement between Bamberg County and Project Black Jack, which had previously been the code name for Black Horse Steel Works. Voting in favor: Chairwoman Hammond, Councilmen Ahlin, Haynes, Donaldson, Comer and Goodman. Councilwoman Martin was absent.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved the calendar of events as submitted.

At this time, Council heard comments from the public. 1) Larry Blue – expressed problems with his road (located at 158 Tread Hill Circle just off Woodhaven), requested that some gravel be placed on the road to help the residents out; and 2) Rev. Clarence Blocker – thanked Councilmen Donaldson, Comer and Administrator Preston for the work that has been done on his road (Riley Road). There has been some additional rain since repairs and this has caused the need for more maintenance.

Chairwoman Hammond asked for comments from council. Council thanked the public for attending and Administrator Preston and his staff were acknowledged for their hard work. Treasurer Alice Johnson was recognized for the work that she has done. All in attendance were thanked for being in attendance at the meeting and all were wished a Happy Easter

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Donaldson, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council voted to adjourn at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC