

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.

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In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bamberg County Council met 6:00 p.m., March 10, 2026 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside live streaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Chairwoman Michelle Martin, Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Larry Haynes, Spencer Donaldson and Dr. Jonathan Goodman. **Absent:** Councilman Ken Ahlin. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Aaron Ness, Gina Smith, Chip Maier, Alisha Moore, Kenneth Bamberg, Shawn Hanks, Sharon Carter, Marilyn Doctor, Alfreda Eaddy, Ronald Eaddy, Carrie Eaddy, Donald Rivers, Will Walls, Annie Jones, Inez Bonaparte, Kathy Rhoad, Adrienne Blume, Trent Kinard, Andrea Rahn and six additional visitors.

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Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Larry Haynes at 6:00 p.m. Invocation was rendered by Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II, followed with the pledge of allegiance led by Councilwoman Sharon Hammond.

On motion by Councilman Donaldson, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, the minutes from the February 10, 2026 were approved with necessary corrections should there be any.

On motion by Dr. Goodman, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved the agenda as presented.

Councilman Haynes presented a framed resolution honoring and commending Mrs. Lena R. Ford Sherman on the occasion of her 101<sup>st</sup> birthday and recognizing her life of faith, family and service to the Bamberg County Community. Mrs. Sherman celebrated her birthday on January 1, 2026. Family and friends were present at the meeting to accept the framed resolution on behalf of Mrs. Sherman. Rev. Annie Jones, daughter of Mrs. Sherman and spokesperson for the family, extended gratitude to Councilman Haynes and the Council for their thoughtfulness.

Councilman Donaldson presented a framed resolution honoring and commemorating Mrs. Carrie Burgess Eaddy, recognizing her centennial milestone and her lifetime of faith, family devotion and service. Mrs. Eaddy celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 27, 2025. Mrs. Eaddy was accompanied by her family to receive the resolution. The family thanked Councilman Donaldson and the Council for their kindness.

A resolution had been adopted in an earlier council meeting, recognizing and appointing the Bamberg-Ehrhardt Girls Track & Field Team as ambassadors for Bamberg County. The team had a perfect season and they were the 2025 South Carolina High School League (SCHSL) Class A State Champions. The team was not present to receive their awards, the awards will be distributed at a later date. The sponsor of the resolution was Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II.

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Presentation of the FY2025 Audit for Bamberg County was presented by Controller Gina Smith, CPA, CRP®, CGM Bamberg County and Mr. Will Walls, CPA – Partner with Love Bailey CPA's. Once again, Bamberg received an Unmodified Audit Opinion, the highest level of assurance, reflecting strong financial stewardship and operational management. For the second consecutive year, Bamberg County completed a Single Audit, which is required when a government entity expends \$750,000 or more in federal funds during a fiscal year. The Single audit ensures the county is complying with federal grant requirements and properly managing federal funds. After an in depth report given by Controller Smith, Mr. Walls followed up by responding that there were NO audit findings for FY2025. This continues Bamberg County's strong record of financial compliance and responsible fiscal management. All were pleased with the report that was presented and congratulations to everyone involved.

#### **COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:**

##### **SOUTHERN CAROLINA ALLIANCE UPDATE:**

Ms. Kathy Rhoad, Southern Carolina Alliance representative, reported on the following:

- . Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Center ribbon cutting if scheduled to be held in Fairfax
- . Workforce programs launched (welding, CDL, industrial training)
- . Regional advisory board established
- . Still working with JGB Brothers: 1) \$7 million investment 2) 30 new jobs 3) Ribbon cutting  
Anticipated for May/June 2026

The Southern Carolina Alliance report was accepted as information.

##### **MONTHLY BUDGET REPORT:**

###### **General Fund:**

- . Revenue collected – 53.31%; Expenditures – 46.75%;

###### **Enterprise Fund (Solid Waste):**

- . Revenue - \$720,937; Expenditures exceed revenue by - \$24,000

##### **Bamberg County Administrator – Monthly Report**

Administrator Preston reported on the following: 1) March 19 – Church Street Ribbon Cutting; 2) Rural Summit in Greer, SC - March 11; 3) County Road Inventory – Updated every 10 years; 4) Road Projects are approximately 50% completion on some projects; 5) Receiving weekly engineering reports – future presentations to include aerial imagery; 6) HVAC, plumbing and electrical upgrades ongoing at Detention Center and facilities; 7) DSS relocation discussions underway and 8) Roof and siding nearing completion in some areas. Administrator Preston called on Keep Bamberg County Beautiful Director Alisha Moore to give an update. She reported the following: 1) Monthly cleanups are planned for each district; 2) Next cleanup is scheduled for March 26, 2026; 3) Litter enforcement efforts encouraged; 4) Public asked to report violators (photos/tag numbers); and 5) Outdoor ashtrays are available for businesses. All information was accepted by council.

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On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved a resolution to recognize and honor the Bamber-Ehrhardt High School Red Raiders Varsity Football Team for winning 2025 SCHSL Class A. State Football Championship and to appoint the players and coaches as

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ambassadors of Bamberg County. Resolution was sponsored by Dr. Goodman. Official tributes will be bestowed to each team participant.

On motion by Councilwoman Hammond seconded by Councilman Comer, council approved a resolution to adopt the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan. This ensures FEMA compliance and flood insurance eligibility.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved first amendment to Special Source Revenue Credit Agreement Special Source revenue. This Amendment to Special Source Revenue Credit Agreement (this "Amendment") is dated effective as of 2026 (the "effective date"), by and among Bamberg County, South Carolina, a Body Politic and Corporate and a Political Subdivision of the State of South Carolina (the "County"); LOWCOUNTRY Properties, LLC, a Limited Liability Company Organized and existing under the Laws of the State of Ohio; and DELAVAN SPRAY, LLC – and dated as of August 18, 2025.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved a resolution to adopt the Bamberg County FY 2027 Budget Calendar.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, council approved first reading of an ordinance authorizing (1) the execution and delivery of a first amendment to Special Source revenue Credit Agreement by and among Bamberg County, South Carolina: Lowcountry Properties, LLC and Delavan Spray, LLC; and (2) Other matters relating thereto.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilwoman Hammond, council approved the calendar of events after adding an addition item.

Vice Chairman Haynes called for public comments. Public comments were made by Sharon Carter, Andrea Rahn and Trent Kinard. Stated concerns: 1) outdated COVID-related messaging; 2) inconsistent meeting scheduling (1<sup>st</sup> vs. 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday); 3) poor working conditions (temperature, sanitation, maintenance); 4) change in leadership policy and why; and 5) transparency. Information was taken under advisement.

At this time, Vice Chairman Haynes asked for comments from council. All made similar comments as thanking the public for being in attendance. Administrator Preston and employees were thanked for their hard work.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Dr. Goodman, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC