

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., July 14, 2026 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside live streaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Council Chairwoman Michelle Martin, Councilmen Larry Haynes, Evert Comer, Jr., Ken Ahlin and Spencer Donaldson. **Absent:** Councilwoman Sharon Hammond and Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Aaron Ness, Chip Maier, Alisha Moore, Shawn Hanks, Rosella Cooper, Kathy Rhoad, Dr. William Molnar, Dr. Eric Brown, Adrienne Blume, Andrea' Rahn, Lee Hendren, Matthew Medley, Mr. Hickman, Mark Tyler and four additional visitors.

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

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Comer, the minutes from the June 2, 2026 meeting were approved with necessary corrections should there be any.

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

Mr. Matthew Medley, M.H.A, FACHE of MUSC Health - Orangeburg CEO, gave an update of the progress and programs at MUSC Orangeburg. They have two new resident programs and each program is a three-year program. It has been questioned how are the physicians recruited to our area and how are they retained? With having the two resident programs, and resident training programs that incorporates family medicine and psychiatry, and a mobile primary care unit for South Carolina that is also used for mobile screening to launch mammography in the Orangeburg facility. MUSC are providing opportunities so that they have made operations of the communities that they serve, and the people that come in its emergency department. Other enhancements they have made during this period include bringing graduate medical education into their communities and families. Many points were elaborated on regarding the services offered at the freestanding emergency department (including lab, imaging, trauma room, stabilization, and transport protocols). After an in depth discussion, addition questions followed and were asked. Council thanked Mr. Medley for coming to enlighten the council and community of its progress.

Dr. Eric Brown, President and CEO of Denmark Technical College, commented on the progress at the college. The enrollment growth was highlighted by Dr. Brown and he included student retention initiatives, and investments in campus facilities. The college has launched a mortuary science and embalming program to meet workforce needs in the funeral services industry. There is a need for community support in expanding fields and facilities to accommodate more students and youth programs. More available housing is needed on the campus and in the community for students and teachers. They do not want to turn students because of lack of adequate housing. Denmark Technical College has a girls basketball team and this recent past year went to the national and participated in national tournament in Buffalo, New York. The college offer soccer, track and field, and baseball. The Alumni will

July 14, 2026....continue

be sponsoring a Fish fry on July 18th, and July 30th, Summer Open House is scheduled from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. New students are expected to arrive on campus August 14-17. An anticipated enrollment of at least 800 students are expected. Additional comments were made by council regarding everyone working together and Dr. Brown was thanked for updating everyone of the progress of DTC.

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:

SOUTHERN CAROLINA ALLIANCE UPDATE:

Ms. Kathy Rhoad, Southern Carolina Alliance Director of Strategic Initiatives, reported on the following:

- . Continuing to work with JDB brothers subsidiary of inner fiber and that's going to bring \$7 million in capital investment at 40 jobs on the workforce development front.
- . There were 14 graduates at the graduation ceremony in Fairfax.
- . Flyers were distributed to the public, advertising jobs for the new Lumber facility located in Fairfax.
- . SCA Regional Manufacturing Training Advisory Board will be held the next week. Additional information on business activities will be provided at the next council meeting. The Southern Carolina Alliance report was accepted as information.

Bamberg County Budget Report

Finance Director T.M. Thomas reported the general fund revenues for FY 26 is \$10,412,413. Special Revenue Funds, E911/Emergency Management, Road Maintenance, Rural Fire Service, on the expenditure side all three of these departments have collectively spent \$869,379 and are within expected levels at 59.08%. The Enterprise Fund/Solid Waste Department, regarding the expenditure side, the Enterprise Fund has spent 76.52% with May 2026 year-to-date total of \$1,402,522. Countywide, the majority of all departments continue to operate within their budget and expected bounds. This report was received as information.

Bamberg County Administrator - Monthly Report

Administrator Preston reported on the following: 1) Unveiling of the monument at the SC 250 ceremony in the next three weeks at 11 a.m.; 2) Roadwork Report and distribution of Road List; 3) Groundbreaking for Historic Courthouse is scheduled for July 24th, at 11 a.m.; 4) Reported that the new Tractor Supply Company is now open for business in Denmark; 5) Chip Maier has just received his 10 year employee pin from the Richland County Sheriff's Department in Columbia; 6) Southern Palmetto Regional Chamber Women's Leadership Luncheon for female department heads to be held August 11 at 12 p.m. in Barnwell, attendance will be coordinated with Rose; 7) C-Fund meeting will be scheduled for the end of August; 8) Council members are to submit one or more names for the opioid recovery focus group task force - submit names to Rose; 9) Chairwoman Martin requested a ride in her district be scheduled with Bill Johnson to inspect roads and road conditions. Also, meet with fire chiefs and related advisory groups to emphasize the need for a multi-year facilities and staffing plan for the volunteer fire departments and relay priorities back to Council; 10) Coordinate with the contractor and historian to complete restoration of the caboose and plan its installation on the downtown pad as a heritage museum exhibit; 11) Scheduling of ribbon cutting for Riley Drive in August; 12) Confirm with the clerk of court which records from the courthouse will remain stored at the courthouse versus being moved to the DSS wing and coordinate that transfer; and 13) Update the detention center plan, including resetting HVAC systems assessing needed repairs, etc. Council accepted this report as information.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council ratified a resolution sponsored by Councilwoman Sharon Hammond of Council District 2, honoring the life of Miss Mary Frances Harrison and her extraordinary contributions to education, music, faith and community service, and recognized her distinguished lifetime of leadership and service to the citizens of Bamberg County. Miss Harrison passed away June 4, 2026. A framed copy of this resolution will be presented to the family.

On motion by Councilman Comer, seconded by Councilman Haynes, council approved a resolution honoring and commending Phoenix Speciality Manufacturing Company upon being named GE Aerospace's 2026 Supplier of the Year. This resolution will be framed and presented to Phoenix Speciality Manufacturing Company.

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

Public Comments:

Public comments were made by resident Adrienne Blume and Andrea' Rahn. Concerns were: 1) Unoccupied buildings at the Industrial Park and no cars are ever seen at the second building; 2) We need to utilize what we have; 3) Place renovations of the courthouse on the fast track.

At this time, Chairwoman Martin called comments from council. All made similar comments as thanking the public for being in attendance, doing what is best for the county and a silent prayer was offered in memory of Senator Lindsey Graham. Administrator Preston and employees were thanked for their hard work.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Donaldson, seconded by Councilman Haynes, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, Clerk to Council