

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 12:00 p.m., June 27, 2025 in Council Chambers with limited seating for the public alongside live streaming of the meeting provided for public view. **Present:** Chairwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilwoman Michelle Martin, Councilmen Evert Comer, Jr., Spencer Donaldson, Kenneth Ahlin, Larry Haynes and Dr. Jonathan Goodman, II (*virtual*). **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Kenneth Bamberg, Chip Maier, Alisha Moore, and five additional visitors.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Sharon Hammond, at 12:00 p.m. Invocation was rendered by Councilwoman Michelle Martin, followed with the pledge of allegiance led by Councilman Spencer Donaldson.

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

Chairwoman Hammond called for reconsideration of third reading of an ordinance to adopt the operating and capital budgets of Bamberg County for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026, 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. On motion by Councilman Donaldson, seconded by Councilman Haynes, Council approved third reading of the budget.

On motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Comer, Council voted to remove the EMS Quick Response Vehicle (QRV) millage increase from the budget. This vehicle would have been housed in Ehrhardt had it remained within the budget.

On motion by Council Haynes, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, Council voted to approved third reading of the FY '25-'26 budget with the amendment. Voting in favor: Chairwoman Hammond, Councilwoman Martin, Councilman Haynes, Donaldson, Comer and Dr. Goodman. Voting not in favor: Councilman Ahlin. The FY '25-'26 budget will go in effect July 1, 2025.

Administrator Preston said the FY '25-'26 budget will help support the Bamberg County Public Works Department, Sheriff's Department and Detention Center.

Chairwoman Hammond called for comments from Council. Councilwoman Martin commented that after taking a tour of the Detention Center, she was concerned about the safety of the employees, inmates and the detention center facility and urged other members of Council to take a tour as well. June 27, 2025....continued

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Another concern was that Council consider taking a look at trimming the overall budget. Others stated that they do have concern for the citizens of the county.

There being no further business for discussion, on motion by Councilman Haynes, seconded by Councilman Donaldson, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, CCC