

BARNWELL COUNTY COUNCIL
January 25, 2016
Council Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, the news media was notified & notice was posted 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Barnwell County Council met for a Special Called Council meeting on January 25, 2016 at 6 pm. Attending were Chairman David Kenner, Vice Chairman Keith Sloan, Councilman Harold Buckmon, Councilman Jerry Creech, Councilman Freddie Houston Sr., Councilman Lowell Jowers Sr., Councilman Joe Smith, Administrator Pickens Williams Jr., and County Attorney JD Mosteller. Also in attendance were Ray Jones, Sheriff Carroll and Laura McKenzie with the People Sentinel.

Call to Order, Invocation, Declaration of a Quorum, Approval of Agenda & Welcome, Public Comments.

The meeting was called to order, the invocation given, a quorum was declared and the agenda was approved. Chairman Kenner welcomed everyone and conveyed the manner in which Council had been made aware of the Hospital's closing and the actions that had already been taken to find solutions in restoring critical care within the County. Chairman Kenner asked for public comments and Charlie Neal, Ruth Rutland, Lacinda McCormick, Angie Boyles, Rudy Still, Johnny Martin, Addie Chappel, Representative Lonnie Hosey, Representative Justin Bamberg, Gibby Sanders Jr., Richard Myers, Rick Holcomb, Ashley Barnes with Low Country Healthcare, Roger Phillips, Mary Beth Stanley, Alicia Hogg Still, Sherry Donaldson, Connie Morris including many others implored Council to find a solution quickly and expressed their concerns that the hospital's closing would cause many unnecessary deaths as there would be no place near for them and their families to receive urgent medical attention. Many also expressed their willingness to help the County in finding a solution. Chairman Kenner thanked everyone for their comments assuring them that Council was working as quickly as possible to restore emergency care in Barnwell County.

Councilman Creech made a recommendation that a letter be sent to the hospital's administrator requesting that the names and addresses of all employees that had been laid off be given to the unemployment office as the LSCOG, EDC, and SCA would be hosting a job fair on February 4th at 3 pm and would only be accepting applications for the hospital employees that had been laid off. No action was taken on this.

Sheriff Carroll said the Sheriff's Department would be transporting persons with mental health issues to one of three hospital facilities; Allendale, Aiken, or Orangeburg County. Inmates needing medical treatment would be transported to the Allendale Facility. Due to this, deputy cars would be seen in these other Counties.

A motion was made to enter into executive session to discuss contractual matters related to the hospital. The motion was seconded and it passed.

No action was taken in executive session.

Chairman Kenner said that the following actions would be taken in moving forward: Councilman Houston would facilitate a team comprised of citizens and other entities to brainstorm ideas to restore urgent care. The Healthcare Committee, comprised of Councilman Jowers and Councilman Smith would continue working with the hospital to see if anything could be achieved. The Safety Committee, comprised of Councilman Creech and Councilman Buckmon would continue work with the 911 provider, Medshore. Chairman Kenner and Vice-Chairman Sloan would reach out to Legislators and to hospitals in the surrounding areas for assistance.

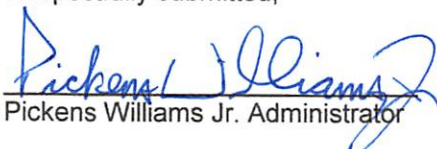
Chairman Kenner assured the public that Council would continue working diligently to ensure urgent health care would be restored within the County as soon as possible and reminded everyone that Medshore and 911 was still available.

Councilman Houston asked that those wishing to serve on the citizens group contact him.

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded and it passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Pickens Williams Jr. Administrator


David Kenner, Council Chairman