

BARNWELL COUNTY COUNCIL
December 11, 2018
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 its regularly scheduled Council meeting on December 11, 2018 at 6 pm. Attending were Chairman Lowell Jowers Sr., Vice Chairman Ben Kinlaw, Councilman Harold Buckmon, Councilman Jerry Creech, Councilman Don Harper, Councilman Freddie Houston Sr., Councilman David Kenner, Administrator Tim Bennett, County Attorney JD Mosteller, and Clerk to Council Kim Futrell. Councilman Harper had to leave the meeting early.

Also in attendance were Attorneys Ray Jones and Sidney J. Evering with Parker Poe, Managing Director Brent Robertson with Stifel Public Finance, Derek Herron, District Director of the Barnwell, Aiken & Edgefield Counties Boy Scouts and Logan Anderson with the People Sentinel.

The meeting was called to order, the invocation and the pledge of allegiance were given and a quorum was declared. Councilman Houston moved to approve the agenda. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion and it passed. Administrator Bennett requested a Resolution and Intergovernmental Agreement with the Department of Energy be added to the agenda. Councilman Houston rescinded his original motion and moved that a Resolution and Intergovernmental Agreement with the DOE be added to the agenda. Vice Chairman Kinlaw seconded the motion and it passed. Chairman Jowers welcomed everyone to the meeting.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Vice Chairman Kinlaw presented Chairman Jowers with a plaque commemorating his serving as Council Chair from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018 and a Resolution of Recognition commemorating his service on County Council from January 2, 2007 to December 31, 2018.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Penny Langford said she called 911 on December 2nd because her grandchild was in respiratory distress and the 911 operator told her an EMS was being dispatched from Hilda. After 6 to 8 minutes, Ms. Langford called the 911 operator back to ask how much longer the EMS would be, and the 911 operator said she did not know. Ms. Langford said after 13 minutes, the EMS still had not arrived and she did not hear sirens, so she took her grandchild to the Allendale ER herself. Ms. Langford expressed concerns over inconsistencies in the 911 transcript, the manner in which incoming 911 calls were being handled, and said Barnwell's 911 operations needed oversight. Raven Santino said Barnwell County needed 24 hour emergency services to ensure the safety of its citizens. Bobby Smith said he was satisfied with the adjustment that Greg Shore with Medshore had made to his EMS bill, but was concerned with the EMS delays he was hearing about. Phil Clarke, Operations Supervisor for Barnwell Medshore, said the call system in which calls were shared between 911 operators in Barnwell and in Anderson had been in place since 2014, with no issues. Mr. Clarke said he did not know why the 911 operator had told Ms. Langford that the EMS was being dispatched from Hilda, because it had been dispatched from Barnwell near the Veterans Park. The GPS had taken the EMS in the wrong direction causing the delay, but it was close to Hilda when it received the call to cancel. Mr. Clarke said since the closing of the hospital, Barnwell had limited resources and because most patients were being taken to Aiken, Augusta, and Orangeburg, each transport was taking over 2 hours.

UPDATES

Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST) – Parker Poe

Installment Purchase Revenue Bonds – Stifel Public Finance

Attorney Ray Jones and Attorney Sidney J. Evering reviewed the CPST process as it related to CPST projects, estimated sales tax collections, bond proceeds, and the necessary criteria to legally bypass projects in the referendum. Managing Director Brent Robertson reviewed the Installment Purchase Revenue Bonding Structure and discussed Barnwell County's borrowing capacity and financial health. Council had questions concerning the possibility of the County's additional borrowing from CPST bond proceeds, beginning and simultaneously working on projects, and the best use of a USDA loan.

Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts – Barnwell, Aiken & Edgefield Counties

Director Herron said scout membership in Barnwell, Aiken & Edgefield Counties had grown by 7½ %, fund raising had increased, and they would be a gold level district by the end of the year. Director Herron said there were 40 scouts in Barnwell and they wanted to extend scouting involvement opportunities to youth in Williston and in Blackville.

Administrator's Report

Administrator Bennett said the asbestos beneath the floors of the Courthouse would be removed in early January, construction would begin midsummer, and Attorney Mosteller was reviewing the Architect Institute of America (AIA) contract. Administrator Bennett said Councilman Harper, Councilman Creech, and he had met with Hilda Firefighters and that on December 13th at 6:30 pm in the Barnwell County Library there would be a Joint Safety and Healthcare Committee meeting with the Fire Departments, Medshore, and the Nursing Home. Administrator Bennett said the concept of a regional EMS service for Barnwell, Bamberg, and Allendale Counties would be discussed at a meeting in January. Administrator Bennett said Councilman Harper, Councilman Creech, and he had met with Representative Justin Bamberg, Senator Brad Hutto and would be meeting with Representative Lonnie Hosey regarding the proposed Multi Purpose Arena. Councilman Houston said the Arena was not supposed to be sponsored by the County and asked why Administrator Bennett's time was being expended by attending these meetings. Councilman Houston asked Administrator Bennett if he was being asked to attend the meetings and if that were not the Committee's job. Administrator Bennett responded that he was attending the meetings at his own initiative to help kickstart the Arena.

Financial Report

Administrator Bennett said he, at Vice Chairman Kinlaw's request, had requested a cost proposal from McGregor and Company for a study of unfunded mandates and their impact on the County's budget. Administrator Bennett said Parker Poe had prepared a spreadsheet listing the County's Financial Incentive Agreements and that he would email the spreadsheet to Council.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Boards and Commissions - No actions were taken.

Government, Transportation, Finance, Judicial, Services - No reports.

Science/Tech. & Regulatory Matters

Vice Chairman Kinlaw reminded Council about an upcoming SRS, CRO, and CNTA event and encouraged Council's participation. Councilman Kenner said he had spoken with President Stuart MacVean at the SRS Reception regarding the closing of MOX and the 900 employment opportunities with SRNS.

Safety

Councilman Creech said there would be a Joint Safety and HealthCare Committee meeting in the Barnwell County Library on December 13th at 6:30 pm.

Housing

Councilman Kenner said he had spoken with Nora Sanders with the LSCOG regarding identifying additional funding sources for the Community Development Corporation to use for housing.

Health Care

Councilman Creech said he wanted the public to know that the Barnwell County Council was doing everything they could to improve the healthcare in Barnwell County.

Economic Development Commission

Councilman Creech said he, other Barnwell County Council members, and the Mayors of the three Municipalities had met and had created an equitable plan to end the existing lawsuit between the County and the Municipalities. Councilman Creech said once the Attorneys prepared the necessary paperwork, the Barnwell County Council and the Councils of the three Municipalities would consider the Ordinance necessary to implement the plan. Councilman Creech said he, other members of the Barnwell County Council, and the Mayors of the three Municipalities had agreed to ask the Barnwell County Council and the Councils of the three Municipalities to begin an open dialogue in 2019, so that these events would not happen again.

Personnel

Councilman Creech said the Personnel Committee had met the week of December 3rd regarding a personnel matter which would be discussed during Executive Session.

Vice Chairman Kinlaw moved to enter into Executive Session. Councilman Kenner seconded the motion and it passed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pre-Contractual Matters Related to Legal Services RFQ

Pre-Contractual Issues Regarding MOX Settlement

Pre-Contractual Issues Regarding Emergency Medical Services

No action was taken in Executive Session.

Councilman Houston moved for Vice Chairman Kinlaw to proceed with recommendations on the pre-contractual issue with SCA to support concerns regarding the closing of the MOX facility. The motion was seconded and it passed.

Councilman Houston moved to approve the Resolution and Intergovernmental Agreement with the DOE. Councilman Kenner seconded the motion and it passed. Administrator Bennett said in the next few months the County would receive a partial payment of \$1.4 million, which would need to be split between the County and the School Districts.

Councilman Houston moved for Council to extend the Legal Services Contract to Attorney Mosteller. Councilman Kenner seconded the motion and it passed.

Councilman Houston moved to adjourn. Councilman Creech seconded the motion and it passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.



Kim A. Futrell, Clerk to Council



Ben Kinlaw, Council Chairman