

BARNWELL COUNTY COUNCIL
June 28, 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 their regularly scheduled Council meeting on June 28, 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, and County Attorney JD Mosteller. Also in attendance were Business Manager Debbie Fickling and Laura McKenzie with the People Sentinel. Clerk to Council Kim Futrell was unable to attend.

The meeting was called to order and a quorum was declared. Councilman Houston moved to approve the agenda. Councilman Harper seconded the motion and it passed.

3rd and Final Reading of FY 18-19 Budget Ordinance

Councilman Harper asked if any funds had been budgeted for the Coroner's relocation request. Councilman Houston said that in discussion with Vice Chairman Kinlaw, it was determined since relocation of the Coroner's Office would be a one-time expense, it would be better to not include it in the current budget but to handle that relocation expense when anticipated revenues, which had not been included in the budget, were received.

Councilman Harper said USC Salk and Denmark Tech had been allotted \$500 each, but DIG/STEM had been allotted \$5,000. He made a motion to remove the \$5,000 that had been budgeted for DIG/STEM. Councilman Creech seconded the motion.

Councilman Creech said DIG/STEM was receiving \$15,000 from other sources and the County did not have the money. He amended Councilman Harper's motion to allow \$500 budgeted for DIG/STEM. Vice Chairman Kinlaw said DIG/STEM had sent an application to Boeing for the \$15,000 but had not yet received it and that the \$5,000 from the County was a third of the DIG/STEM budget. Over 4,000 people attended the DIG/STEM Festival but was struggling financially due to lack of funding from exhibitors. He said DIG/STEM had an after-school program with 75-92 students at Barnwell Primary Elementary and Middle Schools and wanted to expand to the other schools. They offered a 4 week summer camp at Winfield Heights Baptist Church and in addition to DIG/STEM they also offered an Enrichment Program. Councilman Houston said DIG/STEM was not limited to Williston but that children from Barnwell, Blackville and other areas attended the DIG/STEM Festival and summer camp. Councilman Houston said DIG/STEM benefitted children and he did not understand why anyone on Council would choose to not financially support DIG/STEM for the \$5,000 when the budget was balanced and did not include any of the anticipated revenues from other counties.

Councilman Buckmon said he did not have a problem with the \$5,000 for DIG/STEM but felt that all of the higher education line items needed to be the same amount.

Councilman Harper said he did not make the motion to de-fund DIG/STEM to rob any child. He said he made the motion because the budget had been balanced on the backs of every Department in the County and if the County did not give its employees a raise, how would those employees be able to afford to send their children to DIG/STEM.

Councilman Creech said he thought the DIG/STEM program was good but that the schools already received 61% and that they should be providing this program. Councilman Kenner said the schools were already struggling and he agreed with Councilman Buckmon that USC Salk, Denmark Tech, and DIG/STEM should be allotted \$5,000 each.

Vice Chairman Kinlaw said he had reviewed the graduation rates at Denmark Tech and USC Salk. He said that USC Salk had the highest graduation rate above Lancaster, Sumter and Union and that 90% of the nurses graduating from USC Salk would work in SC and 75% would work in Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Hampton, and Colleton Counties. Vice Chairman Kinlaw said he would also support funding \$5,000 each.

Chairman Jowers said he did not have a problem with the \$5,000 and that he had looked at several line items in the budget. He said almost \$6,000 had been budgeted for recreation and asked if DIG/STEM was not a part of recreation. Councilman Houston said DIG/STEM was not recreational and that some of the money budgeted for recreation comes from the State.

Councilman Buckmon moved to amend the budget by allotting \$5,000 each for USC Salk, Denmark Tech, and DIG/STEM Program. Councilman Houston seconded the motion.

Chairman Jowers asked Councilman Houston, as Chairman of the Finance Committee, given all of the reductions that had been necessary to balance the budget, how the County was now in the position to budget additional funding for USC Salk and Denmark Tech. Councilman Houston said the Finance Committee had presented a proposed balanced budget and that it was Council that was making the changes and had the right to do so.

A roll call vote was requested. The motion passed.

Chairman Jowers-Yes	Councilman Creech-No	Councilman Houston-Yes	Councilman Kinlaw-Yes
Councilman Buckmon-Yes	Councilman Harper-No	Councilman Kenner-Yes	

Councilman Houston moved to remove the Economic Development Commission budget of \$199,000 from the County's FY 18-19 budget and that effective July 1, 2018, all EDC staff salaries be paid by the Economic Development Corporation. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion and it passed.

There was discussion related to where the additional \$9,000 would come from in order to increase USC Salk and Denmark Tech each by \$4,500 and it was determined that the funds would be shifted out of the excess revenues that had been placed in Fringe.

Councilman Houston moved to approve the FY 18-19 Budget with the amendments that were made. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested. The motion passed.

Chairman Jowers-Yes	Councilman Creech-No	Councilman Houston-Yes	Councilman Kinlaw-Yes
Councilman Buckmon-Yes	Councilman Harper-No	Councilman Kenner-Yes	

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:49 pm.



 Timothy R. Bennett, Administrator



 Charles Lowell Jowers Sr., Council Chairman