

BARNWELL COUNTY COUNCIL
October 9, 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 October 9, 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 William Lawton with The CEBA Group, Business Manager Debbie Fickling, Public Works Director Curtis Hogg, Emergency Management Director Roger Riley, Clerk to Council Kim Futrell and Laura McKenzie 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 Creech seconded the motion. Vice Chairman Kinlaw moved to amend the agenda by removing the update on the Crisis Response Initiative. The motion was seconded and it passed. Councilman Houston moved to approve the September 11, 2018 Council meeting minutes. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion and it passed. Chairman Jowers welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for public comments. There were none.

Hurricane Florence Briefing

Emergency Management Director Roger Riley briefed Council on the current status of Hurricane Michael and then reviewed the valuable lessons he learned while assisting Dillon County in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence.

Proposed Renovation/Southern Carolina Alliance (SCA) Building

Business Manager Fickling said there had been a \$423,000 cost increase in the estimate for SCA Building repairs. This increase included sidewalk and parking lot repairs, replacement of 8 of the 10 air conditioning units on the SCA Building's roof, replacement of 2 doors, replacement of all of the windows and the lighting in the building. Ms. Fickling said the estimate was based on local vendor quotes and she believed, once sent out for bids, the pricing would decrease. Ms. Fickling said a proposed USDA \$1 million loan to purchase the building included a \$50,000 grant. Payments on the loan for the first two years would be applied to interest alone. At the end of the two years, the County would use the designated \$1 million in CPST revenue toward the loan's balance. Vice Chairman Kinlaw confirmed with Ms. Fickling that the estimate included the structural support for the 2nd floor of the building.

Courthouse Renovation

Business Manager Fickling said once the 3 D scans of the Courthouse were reviewed, a scope of Courthouse repair work would be determined. In November, Meadors Inc. representatives would be in Barnwell to review the project's budget, as costs had been based on 2015 pricing. Councilman Creech asked if any of the funds would be used to repair the Agricultural Building and Ms. Fickling responded that CPST funding was limited to the Courthouse. Councilman Kenner asked if CPST funding could be used as a grant match to offset the possible cost increases. Ms. Fickling responded that it could be used as a grant match, but would need to be used on the Courthouse only.

Road Construction

Public Works Director Curtis Hogg reviewed the Engineering Update and Road Project List.

Administrator's Update

Councilman Creech asked Administrator Bennett to review the County's Medically Indigent assessments for the past few years. Administrator Bennett gave the following figures: FY 15-16 (\$68,475), FY 16-17 (\$98,568), FY17-18 (\$189,810), and FY18-19 (\$268,285). Administrator Bennett said the Administrator for Lexington County had been successful in reducing their County's MIAP assessments by \$800,000 after questioning the State on the rating system and that he and the Bamberg County Administrator were considering joining forces in questioning the State in the hopes for assessment reductions for Barnwell and Bamberg Counties.

Financial Update

Administrator Bennett said in addition to the Finance Department's revenue and expense reports, he had begun including the Treasurer's monthly reports and that he would begin meeting with Treasurer Croft to familiarize himself with those reports.

Committee Reports

Boards and Commissions

The following appointments and nominations were made:

Councilman Kenner appointed Terrance Washington to the Museum Board. Councilman Creech nominated Jennings Owens (District 5 resident) to the Museum Board and Claire M. Barnett (District 3 resident) to the Animal Shelter Board. Councilman Buckmon moved to appoint Rhonda Priester (District 5 resident) to the Library Board and Milton Hardin (District 7 resident) to the Museum Board. The motion was seconded and it passed. Chairman Jowers appointed Tim Tucker to the Museum Board.

Councilman Creech moved to abolish the Zoning Appeals Board and to have County Council and the County Administrator handle future appeals. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion. Council discussed whether this was permissible under State statute and noted it would take 3 readings because it was included in the County's Zoning Ordinance. Councilman Creech withdrew his motion until the matter could be researched.

Government, Science/Tech. & Regulatory Matters, Transportation, Housing, Judicial, Health Care, and Personnel - No reports.

Safety

Councilman Harper said the Safety and Healthcare Committees were working jointly and had met with Bamberg County representatives regarding having a regional ambulance service.

Finance

Councilman Houston said the Finance Committee had met regarding a pan/dirt mover in the Public Works Department that needed repair or replacement and the applications from the Blackville CDC and Denmark Technical College requesting the budgeted \$10,000 in grant match funding had been submitted to Administrator Bennett. The Finance Committee was recommending that Administrator Bennett work with the Solid Waste Department, Public Works, and the Transportation Committee to work within the budget to find a solution regarding the pan dirt-movers. Regarding the grant match funds requests, Councilman Houston moved that Council authorize Administrator Bennett to distribute \$5,000 of grant match funds to the Blackville CDC and \$5,000 of grant match funds to Denmark Technical College. Councilman Kenner seconded the motion. A roll call vote was requested.

Chairman Jowers-Yes	Councilman Creech-Yes	Councilman Houston-Yes	Councilman Kinlaw-Yes
Councilman Buckmon-Yes	Councilman Harper-Yes	Councilman Kenner-Yes	

Services

Councilman Buckmon said the Services Committee had proceeded with the purchase of a new air conditioning unit for the Library. The number of parvo cases had increased at the Animal Shelter due to cross contamination caused by the walls being painted but not having sealant applied. Councilman Buckmon said he had asked the Animal Shelter Board to develop a written procedure to help prevent cross contamination.

Economic Development

Councilman Creech moved to appoint Councilman Buckmon to the At Large Seat on the EDC Board. Councilman Harper seconded the motion. Council asked County Attorney Mosteller if Councilman Buckmon's appointment to the EDC Board would be considered dual office holding and Attorney Mosteller said it would not. Council also discussed the possible ramification the appointment would have on the pending litigation involving the EDC. Councilman Creech withdrew his motion. Councilman Creech said the Recreation Board had approved having a feasibility study done for the multipurpose arena. Two locations in Barnwell, one location in Blackville and one location in Williston were being considered.

New Business

Proposal/Solid Waste Proposal

William Lawton with The CEBA Group updated Council on a Waste-to-Energy Project which Allied Energy Service, LLC was seeking to develop at local government landfills. The proposed project would take 175,000 wet tons of MSW annually, separating it into recyclable material. Glass, aluminum, ferrous metals, inert materials, leather and rubber would be bundled and sold to recyclable markets. Plastics and paper would be pelletized into a non-waste pellet which could be used to manufacture diesel fuel, bio char, and composite fiber board. One percent of the MSW processed would be sent to the landfill for burial. Mr. Lawton said the project was currently underway in the City of Augusta and would create approximately 65 to 100 new jobs. Council asked Mr. Lawton various questions on what would be required for such a project to locate in Barnwell. Attorney Mosteller said that Barnwell County was contractually obligated to send its waste to Three Rivers Solid Waste Authority until 2033. Councilman Buckmon said that contract was going to be re-negotiated because Three Rivers had not fulfilled parts of its contractual obligations. Council agreed that the contractual matters and other factors would need to be researched before decisions could be made.

Councilman Creech moved that the Government Committee contact the Legislative Delegation to investigate the possibility of turning over complete control of the Career Center to the schools, with the provision that all students in the County have equal access to the Center. Councilman Harper seconded the motion. Councilman Houston said he did not think the Government Committee should put specific stipulations when making requests to the Legislative Delegation. Councilman Houston said all students did not pay for the operation of the Career Center. The three Public School Districts paid for students to go to the Career Center. Chairman Jowers said that the Legislative Delegation should decide, but he felt it was a good idea to include the provision in the request. The motion passed.

A motion was made to enter into Executive Session. The motion was seconded and it passed.

Executive Session

Receipt of Legal Advice Regarding EDC Litigation

Receipt of Legal Advice Regarding Potential Litigation Pertaining to the Museum

Pre-Contractual Discussion Regarding Request for Qualifications Pertaining to Legal Services

No action was taken in Executive Session.

Councilman Creech nominated Harold Buckmon for the At Large Seat on the EDC Board. Councilman Harper seconded the motion. Chairman Jowers requested a roll call vote. The motion passed to nominate Harold Buckmon to the At Large Seat on the EDC Board.

Chairman Jowers-Yes Councilman Creech-Yes Councilman Houston-Yes Councilman Kinlaw-Yes
Councilman Buckmon-Yes Councilman Harper-Yes Councilman Kenner-Yes

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.



Kim A. Futrell, Clerk to Council



Charles Lowell Jowers Sr., Council Chairman