

**BARNWELL COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**May 8, 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 May 8, 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. Also in attendance were Danny Black, Debbie Fickling, Attorney Kozlarek, LaCinda McCormick, Rhonda McElveen, Anna McCollum, 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 amend the agenda to have the matter relating to the Bamberg Barnwell Emergency Medical Center discussed in open session. Councilman Kenner seconded the motion and it passed. Councilman Buckmon moved to amend the agenda to include an update from Jack Johnson and to add a resolution supporting the initiative to combat childhood obesity. Councilman Houston seconded the motion and it passed. Councilman Houston moved to approve the minutes from the April 10<sup>th</sup> Special Called and the Regularly Scheduled Council meetings. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion and it passed. Chairman Jowers welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for public comments. There were none.

**Special Presentation**

Councilman Buckmon presented a Resolution of Appreciation in Memory of J.A. Zorn to Mr. Zorn's family and expressed appreciation from Council and the community for Mr. Zorn's exceptional service and dedication.

**Capital Project Sales Tax**

Attorney Michael Kozlarek with Parker Poe said the Department of Revenue had estimated that Barnwell County would receive 13.7 million dollars in CPST collections. Because Barnwell had no history in CPST revenues, Council had borrowed conservatively at 8.8 million dollars which was 70% of the total estimated collections and would allow each community to complete one or more of the projects on their list. Kline only had one project on their list and in order for them to complete their project; the County would have needed to borrow 100% of the estimated CPST collections. The amount each community received from the CPST collections was based pro rata on their population. Interest on the loan was paid out of the CPST collections and was also divided on the same pro rata basis. The amount listed in the referendum for each project was the maximum amount that could be spent using CPST funding. Projects were required to be completed according to the exact wording and in the exact order listed on the referendum. Projects could not be skipped unless proven impossible to complete. If a community was working on a project, they could not begin the next project unless enough funds were available to complete the current project. Attorney Kozlarek believed the County would have enough funds to complete their first 2 projects with a little remaining for their 3<sup>rd</sup> project. However, because there would not be enough funds to complete the 3<sup>rd</sup> project, the County could not proceed with the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> project. Attorney Kozlarek said once the quarterly collections were in, Council could discuss doing a 2<sup>nd</sup> borrowing, but because it was unknown what the quarterly sales tax would be, he would be extremely conservative in having local governments borrow. Additionally, the Ordinance contained a provision that said the County would not approve any borrowing unless it was anticipated the sales tax would be sufficient to pay back the debt service. In response to a question as to whether a community could give their unused CPST funds to another community for use on its project, Attorney Kozlarek said it was unlikely any community would have left over funds but if there were, they could not be diverted to another community. Instead, each community's unused funds would be combined and at that point, the County would decide by Ordinance what to do with those funds. If a community had been unable to complete a project listed on the referendum and there were a combined pool of funds left over, that community would receive a portion of those funds, but only in the same percentage already allocated by the referendum.

**Recycling**

Jack Johnson, Food Services Director for school districts 45 and 19, said in 2015 Councilman Buckmon asked him to begin a recycling program which would be at no cost to the County. Since that time, the recycling program for district 45 was at 80% and his goal was to have a recycling program in all of the schools. Mr. Johnson thanked Council and presented Chairman Jowers with a certificate of excellence.

**Air Methods**

Regional Business Manager Anna McCollum said between August 2017 and March 2018 there had been 20 air transports which would have resulted in those patients being billed \$979,868. However, because the County had purchased a membership, those patients would not receive a bill. The contract renewal was due in August and had been given to Administrator Bennett.

**Southern Carolina Alliance**

Danny Black said in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter there had been 4 announcements, 28 new projects, 10 RFI submissions and 25 project visits in the 7 county region. In Barnwell, there were 17 active projects and 8 new submittals.

**Aiken/Barnwell Mental Health**

Program Director LaCinda McCormick said the Polly Best Center averaged 30 to 40 intakes monthly and accepted walk ins. The Center had a crisis line, an on-call therapist, care coordinators, tele-psychiatry, children's services, emergency services at the jail and individual, family and group counseling.

**CPST Projects**

Business Manager Fickling said that she, Administrator Bennett, the Auditor, Assessor, and Treasurer had toured the SCA building to consider the possibility of relocating their offices. After the tour, the Departments agreed that the layout of the Administration Building was better suited for public access and that the Departments needed to stay together. Ms. Fickling reviewed the proposal of turning the SCA Building into a Judicial Center that would house the Solicitor, the Public Defender, Probation and Parole, and the Department of Juvenile Justice. Additionally the Council chambers could be moved to the Edisto room. The SCA would remain in its current office suite. This move would give these Departments, the Sheriff's Office, the Clerk of Court and the Probate Office the additional space they had been requesting and would allow space in both the SCA Building and the Agricultural Building if offices in the Courthouse needed to relocate temporarily during the Courthouse renovation. Ms. Fickling said she had confirmed that an elevator would not need to be installed in the SCA building as long as there was an ADA compliant office located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and that she had been in contact with both Tom Jordan and James Meadors for cost estimates on determining the structural integrity of the SCA building.

**Clerk of Court**

Clerk of Court McElveen said the Registrar of Deeds Office had been updated with two monitors and updates were underway in the Family Court System. There would be 6 mail outs for the 1,300 upcoming cases.

**Administrator's Update**

Administrator Bennett asked that he or Chairman Jowers be authorized to sign the \$1,000,000 reimbursement grant for Swiss Krono so that it could be returned to the Department of Commerce. Councilman Houston moved that Administrator Bennett be authorized to sign the reimbursement grant. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion and it passed. Administrator Bennett said the Assessor, Auditor, Business Manager, Finance Director and Treasurer attended a QS1 presentation and would be attending a CSI presentation to determine which software would make the exchange of data between the Departments more efficient. Upon review, they would make a recommendation to Council. The Finance Committee had met with multiple departments to review their budget requests and Finance Director Williams had provided 4 years of actuals in revenues and expenditures to aid in the budget preparation. On May 24<sup>th</sup>, there would be a conference call with the Energy Community Alliance to discuss information received from the DOE regarding the PILT.

**Financial Update**

Administrator Bennett said the County's revenues were currently at 61% and expenditures at 64%.

**Committee Reports**

**Boards and Commissions**

Coming from Chairman Jowers previous nomination, Councilman Houston moved to appoint James Williams to the Museum Board for District 4. Councilman Kenner seconded the motion and it passed. Councilman Harper moved to nominate Robbie Sanders to replace Jenalee Muse on the At Large seat of the Museum Board. Councilman Houston said Ms. Muse was his appointment for District 1 and did not serve on an At Large seat. No nomination was made. Councilman Kenner re-appointed Ann Pernel to Axis 1 for District 19, Seat 10. Chairman Jowers re-appointed James McMaster to the Equalization Board of Appeals for District 4. Administrator Bennett said the Equalization Board had met and was able to proceed with 5 members but that appointments needed to be made for Districts 3 and 6. Councilman Harper moved to appoint Councilman Buckmon to the 3 Rivers Recycling Board. Councilman Creech seconded the motion. Councilman Houston said he was serving on the 3 Rivers Recycling Board and asked Councilman Harper if there were a reason that he did not want him to continue serving on the Board. Councilman Harper responded that he had someone else in mind. Councilman Houston asked Councilman Harper why he did not want to wait until his term ended to appoint the person he had in mind. Councilman Buckmon said Council did not need to wait until terms ended. Councilman Kenner asked Chairman Jowers if the 3 Rivers Board had sent a letter and asked Councilman Harper if he had concerns regarding Councilman Houston's service on the Board and Councilman Harper said he did not have any concerns. A roll call vote was requested and the motion passed.

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

**Government, Housing, Services, Health Care, and Personnel** - No reports were given.

**Science/Tech. & Regulatory Matters**

Vice Chairman Kinlaw said the STEM Festival had been a success and that Boeing had attended and was interested in being involved in the next Festival. Vice Chairman Kinlaw said he had provided Council with flyers regarding the Mox Overview and had spoken with a SRS contact on how Council could become more involved.

**Transportation**

Vice Chairman Kinlaw said the SCDOT and LSCOG would be having a meeting on May 9, 2018.

**Safety**

Councilman Harper said there had been 390 dispatch calls in March and 351 dispatch calls in April.

**Finance**

Councilman Houston said the Finance Committee met on May 8<sup>th</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the 18-19 FY budget would be on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Judicial**

Councilman Buckmon said during the School Board Election citizens had gone to the Armory to vote and did not realize the location had changed. With voter turnout being so low, citizens needed to know where to go to vote for the upcoming election. Vice Chairman Kinlaw concurred voter turnout had been at an all time low of 6%. He said that the Voter Registration Office had mailed out notices of the location change and that there was also a sign up at the Armory giving information on where to go to vote.

**EDC**

Councilman Creech said the EDC would be meeting on May 14<sup>th</sup>. Councilman Kenner asked Councilman Creech to get an update on the status of the properties (Ducane and NK Newlook) in Blackville.

**Old Business**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of an Ordinance to Modify and Amend the Barnwell Recreation Commission Ord. 2002-169**

Councilman Buckmon moved to approve the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of this ordinance. Councilman Creech seconded the motion and it passed. Attorney Mosteller said he had contacted three tax attorneys and all agreed that donations to a government entity for a specific purpose were tax deductible. Administrator Bennett said donations were received by Business Manager Fickling who entered the data on a spreadsheet. Finance Director Williams entered the data in quickbooks and on her general ledger, copied the checks and prepared a deposit slip. The Treasurer entered the data on her general ledger and deposited the checks. McGregor had reviewed and approved of this accounting structure. Councilman Creech said the checks would be made payable to Barnwell County/Recreation and would go in a special fund. Councilman Kenner said he had heard news reports that the checks should be made payable to Debbie Fickling / Arena and that clarification needed to be made to the public. Business Manager Fickling said the correct information was listed on the County's website. Councilman Buckmon said the Recreation Commission would be seeking grants and that no taxpayer money would be used for the project.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of FY 18-19 Budget Ordinance**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of this ordinance was rescheduled to May 31, 2018 at 6 pm.

**New Business**

**Appointment to the LSCOG Loan Committee**

Councilman Houston moved for the appointment of Vice Chairman Kinlaw to the LSCOG Loan Committee. Councilman Kenner seconded the motion and it passed.

**Consideration to Reschedule August County Council Meeting - SCAC Annual Conference**

Councilman Houston moved to reschedule the August Council meeting to August 21, 2018 at 6 pm. Councilman Creech seconded the motion and it passed.

**Authorization for Administrator to Contract Inspector to Inspect SCA Building Prior to Purchase**

Councilman Houston moved that authorization be given to Administrator Bennett to contract an inspector to inspect SCA building prior to proposed purchase. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion and it passed.

**Intergovernmental Agreement Related to COG Planning Grant**

Councilman Houston moved to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement Related to the COG Planning Grant. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion and it passed.

**1st Reading of an Ordinance related to the Jasper Ocean Terminal Multi-County Industrial/Business Park**  
This ordinance was read in name only.

**Resolution Proclaiming May 2018 as Mental Health Month in Barnwell County**

Councilman Creech moved to approve this resolution. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion and it passed.

**Consideration of Airport Commission's Recommendation Regarding Status of Burned Hangars**

Councilman Creech said the County had received an insurance check for \$209,000 for the damaged airport hangars. The Airport's recommendation was to replace only the front 5 hangars and once completed to run electrical lines to the building and to the back 5 hangars. Councilman Creech confirmed that a firewall would be put in between the hangars. Councilman Houston confirmed with Councilman Creech that the Airport was aware of the County's procurement policy and would be putting out bids. Councilman Creech moved to proceed with the repairs as recommended by the Airport Board. Councilman Houston asked if any of the hangars being voted on were being rented by Councilman Harper and Councilman Harper responded they were not. Councilman Houston seconded the motion and it passed.

**Approval of Signatories to Rodeo Arena Account**

Administrator Bennett said the approval of signatories was to add signers on the Rodeo Arena account. Business Manager Fickling said additional signers were not necessary as the Treasurer would be the signer due to the funds being held in a Treasurer's Office. Councilman Houston said vouchers would be signed by a Recreation Committee member and a Council member and would be submitted to the Treasurer's Office for payment. No action was needed on this agenda item.

**Schedule Date for 3rd Reading of 18-19 Budget Ordinance**

Council scheduled the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading of the 18-19 Budget Ordinance for June 28, 2018 at 6 pm.

**Resolution of Support Combating Childhood Obesity Initiative**

Councilman Buckmon moved to approve this resolution. Councilman Creech seconded the motion and it passed.

**Discussion Related to the Bamberg Barnwell Emergency Medical Center**

Chairman Jowers said during the May 1<sup>st</sup> Health Care Committee meeting, the Regional Medical Center had asked for financial assistance. Chairman Jowers said the County should not have to pay anything else since it was already paying for indigent care through the State. Vice Chairman Kinlaw said Council was told in previous meetings that they would not need to give financial assistance to the Regional Medical Center. Councilman Houston said in FY 17-18, the County had paid \$180,000 for indigent care. County Attorney Mosteller said the Regional Medical Center had said in prior meetings that they were prepared to absorb any losses. Councilman Creech said he believed it would be helpful if the Regional Medical Center stationed a physician in Barnwell that would refer patients to the ER facility once built.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.



Kim Futrell, Clerk of Council



Charles Lowell Jowers Sr., Council Chairman