

A MEETING OF BAMBERG CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, MARCH 8, 2021, AT 5:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL. MEMBERS PRESENT: MAYOR: Nancy Foster COUNCILPERSONS: Leslie Hayes, Rosetta Draper (Via Telephone), Bobbi Bunch, Willie Staley and Benton Wise (Via Telephone). CLERK: Robin Chavis. VISITORS: Sheriff Kenneth Bamberg, Ken Ahlin, Kim Compton and Jeanette Driggers.

Mayor Foster called the meeting to order and Mayor Pro Tem Hayes gave the invocation.

Mayor Foster asked that the agenda be amended to allow Sheriff Kenneth Bamberg to speak. Mayor Foster asked for a Motion to approve the Agenda as amended. Councilperson Hayes made the Motion to approve the Agenda as amended. Councilperson Staley made the second. All approved. The Motion carried.

Mayor Foster welcome the new Bamberg County Sheriff Kenneth Bamberg. Sheriff Bamberg told Council and the audience that he appreciated the invitation. Sheriff Bamberg said that the Sheriff's office is there to assist in any way they are needed. Sheriff Bamberg said he has a great working relationship with the Bamberg Police Department, as well as Denmark and Ehrhardt Police Departments. The Sheriff stated when the City has problems, the county has problems and vice versa. Sheriff Bamberg said communication is the key and working together other law enforcement as a team. Mayor Foster asked Sheriff Bamberg about his goals as the new Sheriff. Sheriff Bamberg said his priority is community policing. Sheriff Bamberg said he wants to reach out to the communities, and he has been reaching out to the Church which is the backbone of the community. Sheriff Bamberg said he wants to make contact with people when things are good before things get bad. Sheriff Bamberg also said he is are trying to increase visibility in the County. Sheriff Bamberg stated that he wanted to be fair and consistent with everyone and present a more professional appearance with the public. Councilmembers thanked Sheriff Bamberg for coming to speak to Council.

Mayor Foster asked for a Motion to approve the Minutes for the February 8, 2021, meeting. Councilperson Bunch made the Motion. Councilperson Hayes made the second. All approved. The Motion carried.

Mayor Foster asked for a Motion to approve the Budget and Finance Report as a matter of information. Councilperson Hayes made the Motion to approve the Budget and Finance Report as a matter of information. Councilperson Staley made the Second. Mayor Foster asked Clerk Chavis for an explanation of the Budget and Finance Report. Clerk Chavis informed the Council that all departments were doing well at 67%, which is exactly where the City was at this time last year. Clerk Chavis stated the big check for property taxes has been received from the County.

Clerk Chavis stated all departments were doing well and should continue to watch their budgets. All approved. The Motion carried.

UNDER COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

Councilperson Staley stated he did not have a report from Chief Smoak. Clerk Chavis stated that the department was short-handed today and Chief Smoak has been handling calls by himself all day.

Mayor Foster asked if there was any insurance information. Clerk Chavis informed Council there was nothing new for insurance. Clerk Chavis stated that she had been dealing with insurance companies regarding the accident at the Civic Center.

Councilperson Draper said she had nothing to report and turned the report over to Chief Williams. Chief Williams reported for the Fire Department that there were 27 calls for the month of February, of which 19 were in City limits and 8 in the County. Chief Williams reported that the breakdown of the City calls were 8 medical calls, 2 structure fires, 2 grass fires, 2 alarms, 2 smoke fires, 1 LZ, 1 electrical and 1 motor vehicle call. Chief Williams stated that calls in the County included 5 medical calls, 1 vehicle fire, 1 grass fire and 1 alarm. Chief Williams reported that so far this month the department has run 7 calls for the City and 1 for the County. Chief Williams reported that mutual aid was requested by Hunter Chapel fire department for an entrapment in a motor vehicle accident. Mayor Foster asked if the department had to extricate. Chief Williams stated they did have to extricate and provided assistance in setting up a landing zone.

Councilperson Hayes reported that the City had issued 1 business license renewal for the month with 5 new businesses, One Man Show Cleaning Services, Royalty Elegance Designs, Classic Car Wash, Da Hair Doctor and Green Lawn Care. Councilperson Hayes stated that the Bamberg Spring Market did really well and he saw a good crowd at the event. Councilperson Hayes also announced a COVID-19 vaccine event at Denmark Technical College.

Councilperson Bunch reported that there was nothing to report for Sanitation. Councilperson Bunch announced that David Cooler had resigned, and the sanitation department has hired Ronnie Salley.

Councilperson Bunch reported that baseball and softball sign ups had been completed and teams were being picked tonight. Councilperson Bunch stated the season would begin at the Ness Sports Complex the week after Spring Break. Councilperson Bunch said spring Soccer had already started at Ness Sports Complex and those teams were playing on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

UNDER NEW BUSINESS:

Councilperson Hayes made a Motion for the first reading to approve Ordinance 21-1 adding Section 44-45 of the Code of Ordinances for the City of Bamberg pertaining to Household Refuse. Councilperson Staley made the second. All Approved. The Motion carried.

Councilperson Bunch made a Motion for the first reading to approve Ordinance 21-2 amending Section 17-33 of the Code of Ordinances for the City of Bamberg pertaining to the Purpose and Duration of Business License. Councilperson Hayes made the second. All Approved. The Motion carried.

Mayor Foster presented the Comprehensive Plan for downtown Bamberg. Mayor Foster explained the drawings and how adding parking, landscaping and crosswalks would be implemented in the new plan. Mayor Foster said that grant funding had been secured for the park area where the burned buildings were previously located. Mayor Foster said one of the buildings would be renovated with 1% sales tax money. Mayor Foster asked for questions. Ken Ahlin asked if this plan would bring any business to the City and what would be the return on the investment. Mayor Foster said that 7 buildings were sold in the Downtown area, but it depended on the owners as to renovations. Mr. Ahlin asked if the project was paid for. Mayor Foster said it was not, it would have to be done in phases, but \$40,000.00 has been secured for the park area and would be considered Phase 1. Mayor Foster said the Ness Complex would be renovated too. Jeanette Driggers asked if the railing would come down. Kim Compton asked if the first phase was the park and the railings would be Phase 2. Kim Compton also asked if the park area would include a mural. Mayor Foster said that was a separate project with Southern Carolina Alliance and would go on the Brooker building. Councilperson Bunch asked what phase the railings would come down in. Mayor Foster said railings were not in the plan, but removing them right now would be a safety issue without some kind of buffer. Jeanette Driggers asked about the old Brabham station and did the City purchase it. Mayor Foster said the City planned to rent or sell it. Mr. Ahlin asked if SCA was involved in the process of the plan. Mayor Foster informed Mr. Ahlin that SCA does not normally get involved with retail business. Mayor Foster also mentioned that the old Goody's building had new owners and she hoped to see some activity in that building soon. Jeanette Driggers asked about Code Enforcement. Mayor Foster said it is such a lengthy process which has to go before the Magistrate and with Court pretty much cancelled due to COVID-19, and the backup of criminal cases, it was hard to get before the Judge.

Clerk Chavis asked Council to please review the current Employee Personnel Manual and the Municipal Association's Model Handbook. Clerk Chavis stated that there were several sections of the current handbook that needed to be updated. Clerk Chavis asked Councilmembers to review the current handbook and advise if they had any questions or suggestions before moving forward.

UNDER OLD BUSINESS:

Mayor Foster asked for an update on COVID-19. Clerk Chavis said her latest update on March 5th reported only 6 new cases in the County and still 44 total deaths in the County.

There was no Executive Session.

Councilperson Bunch thanked Carol Maxwell and Dianne Black for all of their hard work in planning and hosting the Spring Market. Councilperson Bunch said Mrs. Maxwell and Mrs. Black volunteered to head up this project for the City and had done a great job.

Ken Ahlin asked if the City has had a public hearing for the Comprehensive Plan. Councilperson Bunch said there was five meetings at the Civic Center about 2 years ago that were opened up to the public and citizens gave their opinions.

Ken Ahlin suggested a website. Mayor Foster said we share the website with the Board of Public Works. Ken Ahlin asked if the City has an attorney. Councilperson Bunch informed Mr. Ahlin that Billy Kemp would still continue to serve as attorney for the City.

Jeanette Driggers asked if there was a limit on chain for dogs. Mayor Foster said dogs on chains have been problem and the Police Department does what she can. Mayor Foster stated that the sanitation department gathers stray animals. Mayor Foster also mentioned that there are some animal advocates who are looking out also, and they notify the Chief to address the issue. Councilperson Staley said that if issues are seen that it needs to be reported immediately.

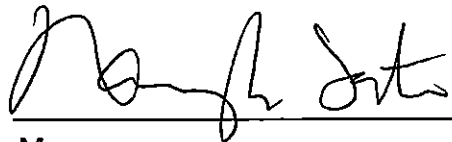
Mayor Foster asked for a Motion to adjourn. Councilperson Bunch made the Motion to adjourn. Councilperson Staley made the second. All approved. The Motion carried.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

ATTEST:



Clerk



Mayor