

A MEETING OF BAMBERG CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020, AT 5:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL. MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Nancy Foster. COUNCILPERSONS: Leslie Hayes, Willie Staley, Rosetta Draper, Benton Wise and Bobbi Bunch. CLERK: Robin Chavis. VISITOR: Sarah Sandifer and Jeanette Driggers. Not Present: Councilperson Bridget Kinard.

Mayor Foster called the meeting to order and Councilperson Wise gave the invocation.

Councilperson Bridget Kinard was not present.

Mayor Foster asked for a Motion to approve the Agenda. Councilperson Staley made the Motion to approve the Agenda. Councilperson Hayes made the second. All approved. The Motion carried.

Mayor Foster asked for a Motion to approve the Minutes for the August 10, 2020, meeting Councilperson Bunch made the Motion to approve the Minutes. Councilperson Draper 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 Draper made the Motion to approve the Budget and Finance Report as a matter of information. Councilperson Hayes made the Second. Mayor Foster asked Clerk Chavis for an explanation of the Budget and Finance Report. Clerk Chavis informed the Council that the budget was currently at 13% which is only a slight change from 11% of last month. Clerk Chavis explained the City had actually received SRO pay for the Middle School Resource Officer in advance as opposed to billing for the other SROs since that officer is essentially like a grant. Clerk Chavis explained that this made the City balance appear more inflated but it is actually a salary and benefits for that officer. Clerk Chavis stated we had received some business license tax funds from the Municipal Association for insurance companies and brokers, but that would probably be the last of those funds for the year. Clerk Chavis informed Council that the bank balance looked good at this point. She stated had spoken with the Police Department and Fire Department regarding their budgets and they were doing well at this time. Lastly, Clerk Chavis stated the Police and Fire Department had received some small grants to help in purchasing some of the equipment they needed. Mayor Foster informed Councilperson Wise that he will understand the budget figures more as time goes by and if he ever has any questions regarding the budget to ask her or Ms. Chavis and they will be glad to assist him. All approved. The Motion carried.

UNDER COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

Mayor Foster asked Councilperson Staley, the newly appointed Police Commissioner, if he would like to report on the Police Department as Chief Smoak was not in attendance due to Court. Councilperson Staley said he did not actually have a report, but stated he did go to the Police Department and meet with everyone and toured the department. Councilperson Staley said the need for an additional police officer was discussed. Councilperson Staley said they discussed some ideas and they would be interviewing a potential officer on Wednesday.

Councilperson Wise stated he did not have any information to report for insurance. Mayor Foster asked Clerk Chavis if the City had seen any reductions in costs yet. Clerk Chavis said we should see some reductions in January. Mayor Foster stated that the healthy food initiative and actions by the police and fire department have helped the City's insurance score. Clerk Chavis stated that Steve Barton had taken many classes which helped the score. The City's SCMIT assessment score overall is 96.47%.

Councilperson Rosetta Draper reported that she was very proud of the Fire Department. Councilperson Draper reported that the Department is busier now more than ever and wanted them to know it does not go unnoticed. Councilperson Draper turned the report over to Steve Barton. Mr. Barton reported that the Department calls for the month were a little lighter. There were 11 calls in the City and 5 in the County for the year. That is 115 City calls, and 64 in the County with 45 First Responder Calls of which 21 hours and 31 minutes were dedicated to just First Responder Calls. Mr. Barton indicated there is a sudden interest in volunteering to join the fire department. The Department has taken on 4 volunteers and another person who is already certified just stopped by to inquire about joining the department right before the meeting. Mr. Barton stated that a positive attitude does good things for the fire department. Mr. Barton reported that the dunk tank rack is in, installed and nice to have. He stated the pagers and radios are also in and everyone is very happy with them. Mr. Barton reported the department was able to get a second thermal imaging camera for half price with grant money from the Municipal Association. Mr. Barton stated the Fire Department has been designated a Fire Safe Fire Department and this designation comes from the state fire marshal's office. This designation involves installation of fire alarms, contact with community, and reduction of fire fatalities and injuries. Of the 470 fire departments in the state, Bamberg Fire Department is one of 57 that met the goals. The department is consistently at the top of fire departments in the state in data quality. The Mayor asked if the Chief was doing any training. Mr. Barton stated that actually Kevin Sandifer, a Captain with the Columbia Fire Department has been assisting with the training and it was appreciated..

Councilperson Hayes reported that the City had issued 56 business license renewals to date. Under Chamber of Commerce information, Councilperson Hayes gave Voting information provided by the Bamberg County Voter's Registration office. Councilperson Hayes asked Steve Barton to thank Chief Williams for getting a fire inspection report that he needed for Job Corps.

Councilperson Bunch reported that the Sanitation Department has had a few complaints regarding debris pickup. Councilperson Bunch stated there seems to be more trash than ever and they cannot seem to get to it all. Councilperson Bunch informed Council that the Mayor has put some information on Facebook regarding what could and could not be placed in the grapple truck. Councilperson Bunch also referred Council to their packets that included a sample ordinance from Williston regarding debris pickup that they may want to consider. Councilperson Bunch informed Council of the various situations that the Sanitation Department is facing and asked for ideas.

Mayor Foster reported for Parks and Recreation that there was contractor who continues to work on Ness Sports Complex and the Berm. The Mayor stated there were volunteers at Foster Park that have started back to school so the Sanitation Department has picked that area back up. Mayor Foster informed Council that the girls tennis team was now playing at the tennis courts. Mayor Foster stated that Mrs. Kinard was missed.

UNDER NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Foster called Council's attention to the copy of the Ordinance of Williston and asked for thoughts from the Council and audience. The Mayor stated that we are short of men and do not have the funds to hire anyone else. The Mayor said the debris has gotten out of hand even with the truck running 5 days a week. The Mayor said there are other things that need to be done in the City besides picking up yard debris. Mayor Foster read off the information in Williston's Ordinance which stated a pickup every two weeks which she thought the city could not do. Councilperson Bunch said she thought something should be sent out to let everyone know that the truck is only running Monday and Tuesday. Councilperson Bunch stated a schedule should be in place. Councilperson Wise stated that he did not know if the Council wanted to look at a penalty that initially falls on the landowner. Councilperson Wise asked who would determine the amount of that fine. Mayor Foster stated that she was not in favor of fines and would like to work with everyone. Councilperson Wise stated that he has noticed that the debris has gotten out of hand. The Mayor said it takes approximately three hours a day just to take loads of debris to the landfill.

Councilperson Bunch stated that she hopes the residents would take a vested interest in their streets. Councilperson Draper stated that she thought there was some confusion as to what the citizens are responsible for and what can be picked up. Councilperson Draper stated that if a person can take something to the dump then they should do so. The Mayor said the LAD sites are free to citizens. Councilperson Wise stated that the City's ordinance allows for 8 yards and Williston's Ordinance allows for only 4 yards. Councilperson Wise further stated that Williston charges for large items. Councilperson Bunch suggested a flyer to those who seem to have an excessive amount of debris. Mayor Foster stated she would provide additional Ordinances if necessary. The Mayor said Monday and Tuesday would be pick up day from this point forward,

and she would discourage residents from putting debris out on other days. Councilperson Bunch suggested that her Commission meet to discuss the ordinance and report back to Council.

UNDER OLD BUSINESS:

Mayor Foster asked for a Motion for the second and final reading of Ordinance 2020-06 to Amend the South Carolina Model Flood Ordinance. Councilperson Bunch made the Motion to Amend the South Carolina Model Flood Ordinance 2020-06. Councilperson Staley made the second. Clerk Chavis explained to Council that this was the second and final reading for the flood ordinance which is a standard Ordinance required by the State and FEMA. All approved. The Motion carried.

Mayor asked for an update regarding the 2020 Census. Clerk Chavis stated that the City of Bamberg was currently holding at 54.6% and has been at that number for about a month. Clerk Chavis informed Council that there were Census workers around town at one point during the month going from door to door. Jeanette Driggers stated that the workers are putting a notice on the door. Mayor Foster encouraged Council to tell everyone to fill out their Census information online or call.

Mayor asked for an update of COVID-19. Clerk Chavis informed Council that there were no new cases on Friday, but there were three new cases today. Councilperson Bunch stated the schools are doing wonderful. Steve Barton stated that COVID testing would be held at the Fire Department on September 25th. Clerk Chavis informed everyone that there would be a blood drive on September 18th at the Civic Center sponsored by the City through The Blood Connection and they would be offering free antibody testing.

Mayor Foster announced that the Farmers' Market was back up and running on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The Mayor announced that there would be a Scarecrow Contest and those scarecrows would be placed on the Berm. Mayor Foster also stated the Holiday Market would be held on the Berm at the Farmers' Market would be held with a date to be announced.

Councilperson Draper made a Motion to go into Executive Session. Councilperson Bunch made the Second. All approved. The Motion carried.

Councilperson Hayes made a Motion to come out of Executive Session. Councilperson Staley made the Second. All approved. The Motion carried.

There were no questions from the press or audience.

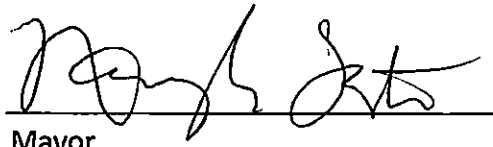
Mayor Foster asked for a Motion to adjourn. Councilperson Draper made the Motion to adjourn. Councilperson Bunch made the second. All approved. The Motion carried.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

ATTEST:



Clerk



Mayor