

REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2005 AT 5:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL. MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Alton McCollum.

COUNCILPERSONS: Buddy Sandifer, Frances Johnson, David Walker, Alex Boykin, Betty Mack, and Nancy Foster. CLERK: Bruce Watson. VISITORS: Henry Maynard, Elliotte Walker, Officer James Smoak, Officer Eric Bamberg, Officer Stephanie Ransom, Officer Robert Merkle, Chief George Morris, Phyllis Overstreet, Superintendent Phyllis Schwarting, and Auditor Dell Brown.

Mayor McCollum called the meeting to order and Councilperson Mack gave the invocation.

Clerk Watson took the roll with everyone being present except Councilperson Nancy Foster.

Councilman Sandifer made the motion to approve the agenda to include the amendments of an executive session to discuss a personnel matter and to allow the auditor's report immediately following the agenda approval. Councilperson Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Auditor Dell Brown of C.C. McGregor and Company informed Council that he was here to give Council a preliminary audit report. He explained that he would return in a few weeks to give the final report once the BPW figures had been incorporated into the final audit report. He said he was waiting to discuss the BPW audit report with the Commissioners before incorporating their figures into the City's audit report.

Auditor Brown informed Council that this year's audit included the new GASB requirements. He explained that the audit was based on the accrual method and that assets exceeded liabilities to give the City net assets of \$2,319,705.00. He explained that expenses exceeded revenues by \$58,544.00 which was mainly due to the FEMA Fire Grant expenditures. Auditor Brown said he found no instances of noncompliance and no material weaknesses in the internal controls of the City. He said the City received an unqualified report this year due to total assets being included in the audit for the first time.

Councilperson Foster entered the meeting in progress.

Councilman Sandifer asked Auditor Brown to explain simply just what kind of shape the City was in.

Auditor Brown said the City of Bamberg was in very good shape.

Auditor Brown explained to Council that a management analysis report still needed to be done by the City before the audit could be completed. He said he would return in a few weeks for a final report.

During the hearing for Mr. Elliotte Walker before Council to determine if he should be issued a business license, Mr. Walker informed Council that the building was not his. He told Council that he did not want a business license but that his son would be seeking a business license when he returned home. Mr. Walker said his son owned the building.

Councilperson Johnson asked Mr. Walker if the business was operating at this time.

Mr. Walker said no.

Chief Morris immediately voiced that the business was open every night of the week including on Sunday. He informed Council that Judge Gibson had ordered the business not to open and ruled that only 10 people could be on the property at any one time. He said Mr. Walker was fined \$500.00 after a jury trial for not having a business license. Chief Morris told Council that the business was a disgrace to South Carolina and to Bamberg. He said there was more alcohol and drugs being sold there than anywhere in Bamberg County. He went on to say that Mr. Walker had no restrooms on the grounds. Chief Morris told Council that due to the fights and beatings occurring at the business that the emergency room was being tied up on weekends. He said one killing had already occurred at the business. Chief Morris informed Council that the Solicitor and Attorney General had told him to use the City's ordinances to shut him down. Chief Morris told Council his female officers should not have to be endangered at such a place especially on Sundays.

Mr. Walker told Council he had to make a sale of alcohol in order to be considered a business. He said he was not selling alcohol.

Mayor McCollum said the judge's ruling must be enforced.

Chief Morris told Council the drunk drivers leaving the business were endangering the lives of everyone's children including their own. He said his officers were going to do everything reasonable to put Mr. Walker out of business.

After some discussion, Councilperson Johnson made the motion to not issue a business license to anyone who wanted to utilize the property as a business. Councilperson Foster made the second. Council unanimously approved. The motion carried.

Minister Daryl Croft from the House of Praise asked Council's permission to use the railroad birm on August 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> to conduct a back to school bash for the kids of Bamberg. He said he was from Bamberg and that he just wanted to serve Bamberg in some way. Mr. Croft informed Council that games, food and anti drug literature would be provided for the kids.

Councilperson Johnson made the motion to allow the House of Praise to use the birm on August 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Councilperson Mack made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Superintendent Phyllis Schwarting informed Council that she was not here tonight to complain at all. She said she appreciated the cooperation and commitment she received from the Bamberg Police Department concerning the school resource officer programs. Mrs. Schwarting told Council that at present each SRO was working for the school 180 days and that during the remaining days of the year they were being utilized by the City. She said at present the school district paid 100% of Officers Ransom's expenses and one half of Officer Bamberg's expenses. Mrs. Schwarting said that at present the school district was only getting \$20,500.00 to pay the two school resource officers. She asked Council if they would consider paying one half of Officer Ransom's expenses also since half of her services were to the City.

Councilperson Sandifer saying we have to agree to disagree, informed Council and Mrs. Schwarting that when the City first agreed to fund the SRO programs that they agreed on how the positions would be funded. He said Council went along with Officers Ransom's position only when the school district agreed to pay 100% of the costs associated with her position.

Councilman Sandifer said City Council was fighting a very tight budget year. He said the taxpayers of Bamberg were paying more and receiving less services. Councilman Sandifer said he could not see even paying half of the costs for resource officer II.

Councilman Sandifer asked Mrs. Schwarting how much the County was giving the district for the SRO programs?

Mrs. Schwarting informed Council that County Council was not giving anything towards the programs.

Councilman Sandifer voiced that the schools within district one were county schools and that the county should be involved.

Mrs. Schwarting told Council that before she sent a message to her students that they didn't care about their safety that she would find the money elsewhere.

Councilperson Foster said Council needed to study the request further.

Councilman Boykin reminded Council that half of the time the SRO officers were working for the City.

Chief Morris informed Council that Mrs. Schwarting had never complained when the officers worked for the City during the summer and holidays. He said she had been very generous. He explained to Council that four schools resided within the City's jurisdiction and that if the school resource officers were not on campus that his regular officers would have to respond to calls at the schools.

Councilman Sandifer said he was not saying the programs were not needed. He said the budget had been set and that the request just needed to come earlier.

Councilperson Johnson voiced that the SRO officers were needed badly. She said Mrs. Schwarting had worked with Council. She said Council knew that Mrs. Schwarting's funding would end after 3 years. She said anything could be changed.

Councilman Sandifer asked Council where the money could be found? He said Mrs. Schwarting already said she would find the money elsewhere.

Mrs. Schwarting said she would fund the money before she sent the wrong message to her students.

Councilperson Foster asked Chief Morris if he could fund the \$21,00.00 in his department's budget?

Chief Morris said it could not come from his department.

Councilperson Boykin asked Clerk Watson if any money could be found within the proposed 2005-2006 budget?

Clerk Watson informed Council that projected revenues in the 2005-2006 budget had been stretched far enough. He said it would be dreaming to anticipate more revenues coming in for any line item listed as revenues. He told council they only had two choices. He said they could cut funding from the department or either increase the millage rate by four or five mills.

Councilman Sandifer agreed for the Budget Committee to meet on Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the request in order to make a recommendation to Council that night.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2005 meeting as received. Councilman Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve the minutes of the May 24, 2005 meeting as received. Councilperson Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

The Budget and Finance Reports were received as presented.

During the Commission reports, Councilman Sandifer reported that the Police Department was running well. He said a few policy changes needed to be made. He told Council that he and Chief Morris were talking.

Councilman Sandifer told Council that the biggest issue was over money. He said Council must face the fact that additional monies were not here. He voiced that he was a conservative and that he also paid taxes. He said that he was going to be the watchdog overseeing the budget.

Chief Morris introduced Officer Robert Merkle to Council as the new officer on board.

Chief Morris explaining to Council that he felt the wrecker services presently on the rotating list were charging excessive prices for their services, urged Council to look into setting maximum rates that could be charged by them for hauling and storing vehicles.

Councilman Sandifer and Chief Morris agreed to look into the matter.

Councilperson Johnson thanked Council for the two summer youth workers who were allowed to work on the Sanitation Department. She informed Council that they were working very hard.

Councilperson Foster informed Council that business license renewals would be going out next month.

Under Old Business.

Councilman Sandifer informed Council that he had been promised and promised an answer concerning the renovation of the Police Department. He said everything was at a stand still. He urged Council to just wait and see.

Mayor McCollum informed Council that no response had been received from County Council concerning the Fire Service Contract. He said the County Fire Advisory Board would be meeting with County Council this week to discuss the whole fire service throughout the county. Mayor McCollum said Council should know something once they met.

Under New Business.

After Clerk Watson explained the amendment to the garbage contract, Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve the contract extension and modification agreement that would amend the present contract with Southland Sanitation and extend the contract for another three years. Councilperson Mack made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Passing the gavel to Mayor Protem Sandifer, Mayor McCollum made the motion to approve \$7,000.00 for this year's July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration. Councilperson Mack made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to allow Clerk Watson to seek proposals for a grapple loading truck for the Sanitation Department. Councilman Walker made the second. All approved.

Councilperson Foster informed Council that the historical marker on the railroad birm needed to be replaced. She explained that the old marker had been destroyed and said

Gene Cooner of the Highway Department was willing to help erect a new one if Council purchased one. Councilperson Foster told Council that SC Archives and History would be involved in the process to make a new marker which would bring attention to the oldest railroad bed in the Country. Councilperson Foster said the railroad birm was a very important part of Bamberg's history.

After Councilperson Foster informed Council about the significance and importance of the historical marker being replaced on the railroad, Councilperson Johnson made the motion to purchase a marker for \$1,600.00 with the funds to come from the funding that had been budgeted for the Sesquicentennial Event. Councilman Boykin made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Johnson made the motion to go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Councilman Boykin made the necessary second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilman Walker made the motion to come out of the executive session. Councilman Boykin made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

With no further business, Councilperson Mack made the motion to adjourn. Councilperson Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Clerk

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Mayor