

REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2004 AT 5:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL. MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Alton McCollum. COUNCILPERSONS: Buddy Sandifer, Frances Johnson, David Walker, Betty Wells, Betty Mack and Nancy Foster. CLERK: Bruce Watson. VISITORS: Phyllis Overstreet, Jerry Durgan, Chief Timmie Taylor, Terry Still, Paul Sandifer, Keith Black and a host of other volunteer firemen.

Mayor McCollum called the meeting to order and Councilman Walker gave the invocation.

Clerk Watson took the roll call with everyone being present.

Councilperson Mack made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2004 meeting as received. Councilperson Wells made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Wells made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2004 meeting as received. Councilman Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilman Walker made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2004 meeting as received. Councilperson Mack made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Johnson made the motion to approve the Budget and Finance Reports as received. Councilperson Wells made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Under Commission Reports:

Councilman Sandifer reported that the BCEDC had met today and learned that the Mungo Casket Co. was slowly moving into the USA Building. Councilman Sandifer reported that the location of a business at the Cross Rhodes Park is moving forward and that permitting procedures are being addressed at this time.

Councilman Sandifer informed Council that the Public Buildings Committee was well satisfied with the plans for the addition and renovation of the Police Dept. He said at present the City was on target with the project.

Clerk Watson explained the bidding process for the addition.

Councilman Sandifer informed Council that recreational programs for the City were dormant at this time but that repairs would be made to the facilities soon.

Councilperson Johnson informed Council that she would tell Chief Morris that she didn't like information discussed during executive sessions showing up in the paper.

Councilman Walker informed Council that things in the Fire Dept. were running smoothly. He made Council aware of a few problems with burned houses, unkept lots and piles of debris in his district.

Councilperson Wells said she would inform Jimmy Sweatman about the household debris.

Councilperson Wells informed Council that the Sanitation Dept. had been busy cleaning the town for the festival and that things were running smoothly.

Councilman Walker made Mrs. Wells aware of a cut tree that needed to be picked up at Thankful Baptist Church.

Councilperson Mack informed Council that the Insurance Committee discussed the available insurance plans at length. She said they were recommending that the City stay with the SCLGAG at this time. She said they felt the pool fund would be more secure.

Councilperson Foster informed Council that business license renewals were where they needed to be at this time.

Mr. Charles Ayers informed Council that citizens had discussed with Council ten months ago the need for hydrants in the Wren Street area. He said he had seen nothing on the agendas since that date. He told Council another near disaster had occurred in his area due to another fire. Mr. Ayers voiced that as a citizen and taxpayer that they needed to be protected like all other citizens in the City of Bamberg.

Mayor McCollum assured Mr. Ayers that he had checked with Manager Ellis of the BPW who told him that engineers were drawing up plans at this time for the hydrant system and that they would be installed by the end of the year. He said permitting for the system was being secured at this time. Mayor McCollum said the installation of the system would be a joint effort between the BPW and the City.

Councilperson Johnson told Mr. Ayers it takes time to develop such a system.

Mrs. Ayers said he had been living there for twenty years and felt that was plenty of time.

Concilperson Foster assured Mr. Ayers that Council had discussed the hydrant system during several of Council' meetings.

Under Old Business:

Councilperson Wells made the motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 04-04 to borrow \$185,00.00 from Enterprise Bank. Councilperson Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Johnson made the motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 04-05 to amend the Business License Ordinance. Councilperson Mack made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

After Clerk Watson explained the process for removing the 3.2 acre Bamberg Community Park on Faust Street from the Federal Park System, Councilperson Johnson made the motion to close the park and to have an MAI appraiser due the required appraisal work at a cost of around of \$3,500.00. Councilman Sandifer made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Under New Business:

Councilperson Wells made the motion to rescind the present Police Department Policy Manual, the Safety Management Manual and the Personnel Policy Manual. Councilperson Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Johnson made the motion to approve and adopt the revised Police Department Manual, the Safety Management Manual and the Personnel Policy Manual with revised dates of September 13, 2004. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Johnson made the motion to have all employees return the old manuals and sign all the papers necessary in order to receive the new manuals. Councilperson Wells made the second. During the discussion, Councilman Sandifer asked if the employees would be signing papers saying that they had read the manuals. Clerk Watson explained that they would be signing papers drawn up by personnel lawyers to say they had received the manuals. Clerk Watson told Council he felt sure the papers covered all the legal bases since the lawyers had done the paper work. All approved of the motion. The motion carried.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 04-06 adopting and enacting the new Code of Ordinances for the City of Bamberg. Councilperson Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

During the discussion of the 2004-2005 Fire Service Contract, Councilman Sandifer told Council that he and Chief Timmie Taylor had told County Administrator Clark two years ago that the City would be asking for an increase. He said he felt a \$10,000.00 increase was not to much to ask for. Councilman Sandifer informed Council that a letter had been sent to County Council informing them that the \$10,000.00 increase was included in the City's 2004-2005 budget. He said the City received a response saying the Bamberg County Public Safety Committee and County Council had met but denied the request. Councilman Sandifer said the Bamberg Fire Department answered 37% of the calls in the country last year which would account for \$80,000.00 in cost of the over \$200,000.00 budget for the Fire Department. Councilman Sandifer said it was not fair for the citizens of Bamberg to subsidize the rural areas for fire protection since the county had a fire millage tax they could use to pay for fire services to the rural areas. He told Council of the \$80,000.00 in cost the City only received \$40,500.00.

Councilman Sandifer informed Council that the county received \$223,747.00 in 2003-2004 due to their fire millage tax. He said they spent \$178,000.00 to pay the fire contracts throughout the county. Councilman Sandifer said the County Treasurer said the county had collected \$228,000.00 and would have \$95,000.00 left in reserves at the end of the year. Councilman Sandifer voiced that he was a city taxpayer, a county taxpayer and a county fire taxpayer but as a city taxpayer it was not right to subsidize the rural areas for fire protection.

Chief Timmie Taylor informed Council that on August 28<sup>th</sup> he attended a Fire Advisory Board meeting in which it was reported that \$283,975.00 was in reserves. He said at another meeting on August 26<sup>th</sup> Mr. Clark reported that County Council had denied the City's request.

Mayor McCollum informed Council that a County Council member had told him that County Council never discussed the City's request.

Press members Phyllis Overstreet and Jerry Durgan who were in the audience were questioned by Council. They said they didn't recall County Council ever discussing the request at meetings they had attended.

Mayor McCollum informed Council that even if County Council approved the \$10,000.00 increase and raised the contract to \$50,500.00 that there would still be a deficient of around \$37,000.00. He said he felt the \$10,000.00 increase was not an unreasonable request.

Councilman Sandifer informed Council that as of today the amount of answered calls in the country was at over 52% for this year. He said the year would end in October.

Chief Taylor informed Council that seven volunteers of the Bamberg Fire Department would be hurt if the City decided not to serve outside the city limits. He explained that anyone who could not secure protection from a fire department five miles of their home would automatically go to an ISO rating of 10. He said on behalf of the Bamberg Fire Department that all the volunteers had decided to back any decisions made by City Council.

Mr. Terry Still a volunteer for the Bamberg Fire Department who lived outside the City said his insurance would go from \$511.00 per year to \$1,545.00 a year.

Councilman Sandifer kept reiterating that County Council keeps saying they had already approved their budget before receiving the City's request. He said the Fire Service contracts were not a budgeted item but that a separate fire millage tax covered the costs of the contracts.

Mr. Keith Black another member of the volunteer for the City of Bamberg and a constituent of County Council informed Council that his fire insurance would triple. He assured Council that they were going to be there for the City and asked for a chance to start discussing the matter with people outside the city.

Mr. Still told Council he had already called County Council Member Isaiah Odom who had no idea about the City's request. Mr. Still felt City Council and County Council needed to meet to discuss the matter.

Councilperson Foster asked the audience what they were saying.

Mr. Black said the press needed to be involved. He said he was upset at providing resources to the County Fire Services but yet they were being told there was no funding. He said he had answered fire calls to Denmark to be the second person on the scene to pull the hoses from the Denmark truck.

Mayor McCollum said two years ago County Council informed the City that landfill fees would now be charged for all commercial garbage from the City of Bamberg. He said the cost came to \$75,000.00 per year. He said they never asked us to discuss this. Mayor McCollum said the City had to increase the budget to cover the \$75,00.00 increase in expenses. He said the City only asked them for a \$10,000.00 increase.

Councilperson Johnson voiced that the citizens needed to know what was taking place.

Councilman Sandifer said the City Council needed to set a deadline. Councilperson Foster said she felt City Council needed to meet with County Council concerning the matter.

Chief Taylor assured Council that the Fire Department would back them.

Mr. Still told Council that it would offend Delevan not to have good fire service since they let their employees who are volunteers answer calls at anytime during their work hour with no reduction in pay. He and Paul Sandifer told Council it scared them to think some people would not have fire coverage. Paul Sandifer asked what a life was really worth.

Councilman Sandifer said City Council did not need to bow down. Councilperson Mack said City Council should request to be on County Council's agenda at their next meeting.

During the discussion of a deadline, Councilperson Johnson wanted the date set for October 10<sup>th</sup>. After some further discussion, Councilperson Johnson made the motion to set the deadline for November 15<sup>th</sup> at which time the City would not answer any calls outside the city limits. Councilperson Mack made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilman Walker made the motion for City Council to be placed on the County Council agenda for October 4, 2004. Councilperson Mack made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilman Walker referring to City Council and County Council said we should all be as one family.

During the announcements, Mayor McCollum informed Council that they and their spouses were invited to the reception at the Hooten Black House following the parade to honor the dignitaries and military personnel who would be taking part in the parade.

Jerry Durgan asked how the County Advisory Board voted.

Chief Taylor said he abstained from voting on the City's request. He said everyone else voted to deny the request.

Councilperson Foster voiced that the City's request should have gone directly to County Council and not the Advisory Board.

Chief Taylor said he was hung out to dry at the meeting and he said the request should have gone to County Council and not the Advisory Board.

Councilperson Johnson announced that Mrs. Carrie Givens had thanked Council for the plaque they presented her to celebrate her 104<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Councilperson Foster reminded Council about the Legislative Reception sponsored by the Heritage Corridor to be held on October 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at the Edisto Research Center in Blackville.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Clerk

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Mayor