

REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2008 AT 5:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL. MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Alton McCollum. COUNCILPERSONS: Buddy Sandifer, Janeth Walker, Teresa Hannibal, and Nancy Foster. CLERK: Bruce Watson. VISITORS: Fire Chief Timmie Taylor, Phyllis Overstreet, Jerry Halmon, and Police Chief George Morris.

Mayor McCollum called the meeting to order and Clerk Watson gave the invocation.

Clerk Watson took the roll with everyone being present except Councilpersons Bamberg and Fralick who he said had called to say they would be unable to attend due their jobs.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2008 meeting as received. Councilperson Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Walker made the motion to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2008 meeting as received. Councilperson Hannibal made the necessary second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Hannibal made the motion to approve the Budget and Finance Reports as presented. Councilperson Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Under Commission Reports.

Commissioner Sandifer informed Council that it would be a day or two before they received the signed school resource officer contracts back from the School District One.

Commissioner Sandifer informed Council that he was asked if the City had ever considered making Bamberg a Smoke Free City. He told them Mrs. Dianne Wilson of the group Fresh Air Everywhere would be willing to come and talk to them about the ordinance that would be required.

Councilperson Foster asked if he was just talking about making restaurants smoke free?

Commissioner Sandifer said it would apply to all buildings within the city.

Councilperson Hannibal asked if people would be allowed to smoke on the grounds around the buildings?

Commissioner Sandifer said the ordinance would specify how close you could be to a building while smoking on the grounds.

Councilperson Hannibal informed Council that the City of Greenville had just become a Smoke Free City.

Councilpersons Walker and Foster said they would like to hear what Mrs. Wilson had to say about becoming a Smoke Free City.

Commissioner Walker informed Council that a month ago state budget officials agreed to increase the medical insurance premiums for state employees and their family members who smoked or chewed tobacco. She said participants can anticipate a \$25.00 increase in premiums by 2010 due to the exposure to non smokers and due to the increase in tobacco related issues.

Councilperson Hannibal informed Council that she really had no report but that she wanted them to know that Mr. Jonathan Winningham had become the City's new fire fighter.

Commissioner Foster informed Council that the plaque was in place recognizing Phoenix Specialties for their twenty thousand dollar gift of playground equipment which was placed at Foster Park. She said they were working on a celebration date so Phoenix Specialties could be officially recognized.

Commissioner Foster reported that the Sanitation Department was doing a good job of maintaining Ness Park and Foster Park but said some work needed to be done at the parking lot downtown.

Commissioner Foster asked where the City stood with the Community Plan?

Mayor McCollum informed Council that he would be attending the Mayors Institute this month which would begin the process for the Community Plan.

Commissioner Foster told Council that Mr. Harry Crissy was already conducting interviews with the citizens as part of the Community Plan process.

Mayor McCollum informed Council that Mr. Kell Anderson, the Southern Carolina Alliance Director for Bamberg County, had met with him this morning and that they had a good discussion concerning economic development efforts for the City of Bamberg. Mayor McCollum explained that Mr. Anderson and Mr. Crissy would be working together to promote economic development within the area.

Councilman Sandifer informed Council that he had talked to Mr. Buzzy Bunch and Mr. Robert Williams who had agreed to serve as co-directors for the Summer Youth Baseball Program next year.

Councilman Sandifer then made the motion to appoint Mr. Buzzy Bunch and Mr. Robert Williams as co-directors of the Summer Youth Baseball Program. Councilperson Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Under Old Business:

Councilperson Walker, informing Council that Mr. Charles Ayers was very appreciative for being asked to serve on the Planning Commission and was ready to go, made the motion to appoint him to the Planning Commission to fill the unexpired term of the late Mr. Edward McDonald. Councilperson Hannibal made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Foster informed Council that Mr. Robert Thomas who lives in Bamberg and who is Head of the Housing Authority has agreed to serve on the Board of Zoning Appeals. She told Council that Mr. Thomas had a real knowledge of what was needed.

Councilperson Hannibal made the motion to appoint Mr. Robert Thomas to the Board of Zoning Appeals to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Mac Moore. Councilman Sandifer made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Under Old Business:

Treasurer Bruce Watson explained to Council that the delinquent taxes for the City of Bamberg had continued to climb from 1998 when they stood at \$72,112.00 to \$270,995.00 in 2007. Treasurer Watson said after talking to Mrs. McMichael, the Delinquent Tax Collector for the County of Bamberg, he had learned that \$189,867.00 of the taxes was on equipment and fixtures which were assessed by the SC Department of Revenue. He said of the \$916,827.00 the county also had out in delinquent taxes around \$762,715.00 was due to delinquent taxes on equipment and fixtures. Treasurer Watson explained individuals were not filing their PT100 forms annually and thus their taxes were going out of sight since the Department of Revenue placed figures on the equipment and charged late assessments. Treasurer Watson said the delinquent taxes on fixtures and equipment were mainly inflated figures which needed to be cleared up. He informed Council that he had talked to other city and county officials and learned that they do not issue business licenses if you owe back taxes and some utilized the set off debt program to collect back taxes. He asked for guidance from Council.

Councilman Sandifer agreed the delinquent taxes needed to be cleared up but cautioned that the City needed to work with the individuals who owed the back taxes.

Councilperson Walker informed Council that the business owners may not know they should file the PT100 form annually.

Councilperson Foster said the individuals needed to be warned and then checked on periodically. She agreed that the City needed to start the process to collect the delinquent taxes.

Council agreed to have Treasurer Watson notify the individuals that their next year's business licenses would not be issued until the delinquent taxes were cleared up. Mayor McCollum said he would write County Council concerning the problem.

Councilman Sandifer made the motion to go into executive session to discuss negotiations incident to the purchasing of property. Councilperson Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to come out of the executive session. Councilperson Hannibal made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

During the announcements, Chief Morris informed Council that Kelly Communications should deliver the new patrol car within in a few days.

Councilperson Foster urged everyone to stay and shop in Bamberg which would also save gas.

Councilman Sandifer reminded Council that the Southern Carolina Alliance would be having their Annual Industry Appreciation Banquet on Thursday at 5:30 p.m. at the Sweatwater Country Club in Barnwell. He urged everyone to attend.

Fire Chief Timmie Taylor announced that the new fire truck should arrive in November or December.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Clerk

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Mayor