

BARNWELL COUNTY COUNCIL
February 12, 2019
Council Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, the news media was notified & notice was posted 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Barnwell County Council met for its regularly scheduled Council meeting on February 12, 2019 at 6 pm. Attending were Chairman Ben Kinlaw, Vice Chairman Harold Buckmon, Councilman Daniel Alexander, Councilman Jerry Creech, Councilman Don Harper, Councilman Freddie Houston Sr., Councilman David Kenner, Administrator Tim Bennett, County Attorney JD Mosteller, and Clerk to Council Kim Futrell.

Also in attendance were Clerk of Court Rhonda McElveen, Medshore Operations Chief Phil Clarke, and Logan Anderson with the People Sentinel.

The meeting was called to order, the invocation and the pledge of allegiance were given and a quorum was declared. Vice Chairman Buckmon moved to approve the agenda. Councilman Kenner seconded the motion and it passed. Councilman Creech moved to approve the January 8th Council meeting minutes. Councilman Houston seconded the motion and it passed. Chairman Kinlaw welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for public comments. Assistant Coach for Barnwell High School Craig Martin said Sporting Clays was a growing sport, with many colleges offering scholarships. Mr. Martin asked Council to consider making the equine center a multi-purpose arena, as it would benefit local high schools by giving them a place to practice and for them to host Sporting Clays events. Councilman Houston said the arena was a private/public project which had been endorsed by County Council, but was to be built using private donations, with no tax dollars being spent. Councilman Houston said the use of the arena would not be determined by County Council and did not need County Council's approval, as it would not be a County owned facility.

UPDATES

Family Court

Clerk of Court Rhonda McElveen reviewed the Palmetto Automated Child Support System (PACSS) and the State Disbursement Unit (SDU) being implemented statewide. Barnwell County went live with the system on February 4, 2019.

Medshore

Operations Chief Phil Clarke reviewed Medshore's 2018 annual report. In 2018, Medshore had 4,598 calls and 3,053 transports with an average response time of 11 minutes and 36 seconds. Mr. Clarke said additional hours were included in Medshore's 2019 budget which would enable them to bring up a 5th ambulance on a more consistent basis.

Multi-Purpose Arena

Councilman Creech said 90% of the County supported the arena and 10%, including some Council members, did not. Councilman Creech said the arena would give the youth in Barnwell something to do and would be multi-purposed. Councilman Creech invited everyone to attend the tour on March 11th to see a similar arena in Statesboro, GA. Councilman Houston said he wanted to clarify and for the minutes to reflect that there was no one on Council that opposed the arena. Councilman Houston said the minutes of a previous meeting would reflect that Council endorsed the arena but had agreed that no tax dollars would be spent.

Administrator's Report

Administrator Bennett said the subcommittee formed by the Recreation Committee would be reviewing the two submissions received from firms desiring to conduct the feasibility study for the arena. Administrator Bennett said the intent was to use County employees to get things underway with the arena but to use private donations, not tax dollars, for its construction and operation. Administrator Bennett said Chuck Kearns, Chief Executive Officer for Chatham County Emergency Services, briefed officials from Barnwell, Bamberg, and Allendale Counties on the pros and cons of the regional EMS concept. Administrator Bennett said the EMS Committee had its first meeting to discuss its mission of improving the quality of medical services in the County and prioritizing objectives. Administrator Bennett said preparation for the 2020 Census was underway. Councilman Houston stressed the importance of involving local citizens in preparing for census for the best outcome.

Financial Report

Administrator Bennett said the 17-18 audit would be presented at the March Council meeting. Chairman Kinlaw said the auditors were compiling a report on the financial impact of State mandates and Local Government Funds received.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Boards and Commissions

Councilman Alexander nominated Sybil Horton to the Library Board and appointed Allison Forehand to the Recreation Committee.

Finance, Housing – No reports.

Government

Chairman Kinlaw said he had attended an inaugural mayors' forum in Aiken and that all counties, both small and large, were experiencing similar issues to that of Barnwell in regards to infrastructure, EMS, and first responders.

Science/Technology & Regulatory Matters

Chairman Kinlaw said the next Up & Atom breakfast would be held in N. Augusta, SC.

Transportation

Councilman Creech said the Committee had approved \$20,000 for rocking on Blaze Lane in Blackville. Rocking on Lunar Lane was 99% complete. Herb Cooper would be attending the March Transportation Committee meeting to discuss the Barnwell County Transportation Committee becoming self administered. Roy Street, Holmes Street, and Jewell Lane were combined under one PIN and would be put out for bid in March.

Safety

Councilman Harper said the EMS Committee had formed its mission statement and a prioritized list of major issues they would begin working on.

Judicial

Councilman Buckmon said in a joint Judicial and Personnel Committee meeting, the Barnwell County Magistrates had requested that the County eliminate the constables' positions and hire a deputy. This recommendation was referred to the Personnel Committee for follow up with the Finance Committee.

Services

Councilman Buckmon said the roll off truck at the Landfill needed repair and that the Solid Waste Department had not yet received the recyclable containers that had been ordered.

Healthcare

Councilman Creech said the Healthcare Committee had met with one EMT Company and when the County's EMT service was put out for bid, they would ask the company to submit a bid.

Economic Development

Councilman Harper moved to award the contract to repair the Airport hangar, damaged by a fire in 2016, to B & F Mechanical. Councilman Houston seconded the motion and it passed.

Personnel

Councilman Alexander said the Personnel Committee had a joint meeting with the Judicial Committee and the request to eliminate the constables' positions and to hire a deputy would be addressed during the next budget cycle.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of Bob Cothran to the Thoroughbred County Tourism Advisory Committee

Councilman Houston moved to re-appoint Bob Cothran to the Thoroughbred County Tourism Advisory Committee. Councilman Buckmon seconded the motion and it passed.

A motion was made to enter into Executive Session. The motion was seconded and it passed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pre-Contractual Issue Regarding the Courthouse Repairs / Receipt of Legal Advice Where Legal Advice Relates to Matters Covered by Attorney-Client Privilege / Discussion Related to Personnel Matters

No action was taken in Executive Session.

Open Session

Councilman Houston moved to begin the process of purchasing the SCA building and for the County Administrator to have Danny Black sign the contract. The motion was seconded and it passed.

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded and it passed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11pm.



Kim A. Futrell, Clerk to Council



Ben Kinlaw, Council Chairman