

CITY OF BARNWELL, SOUTH CAROLINA

MINUTES of the MEETING of BARNWELL CITY COUNCIL

November 7, 2022 – 5:30PM

MEETING LOCATION:

130 Main Street, Barnwell, SC 29812

Barnwell City Council met in Regular Session with Mayor Rivera presiding.

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Marcus Rivera, Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Kinlaw, and Councilmembers Brad All, Ryan Bragg, Alicia Davis, James Moody, and Ron Still

Councilmembers Absent: None

Others Present: City Administrator Lynn McEwen, City Clerk & Treasurer Kim Vargo, City Attorney Thomas Boulware, Police Chief Lamaz Robinson, and Fire Chief Tony Dicks

Ms. Alexander Whitbeck of the People Sentinel was also present.

CALL TO ORDER & PRAYER

Mayor Rivera called the meeting to order. Councilmember Bragg led in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council led the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Councilmember Moody made a motion to amend the agenda by placing Public Comments before Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Davis and unanimously approved. Mayor Pro Tem Kinlaw made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Still and unanimously approved.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Phyllis Rhodie thanked the City for putting up no littering signs. She requested that the City look at the abandoned buildings on Marlboro Ave. She also requested that the areas around Church St and Calhoun St be scheduled for litter pickup.

Police Officer David Greene informed Council that he was speaking for himself and the police department. They want the City to consider switching from the current group insurance plan to the State plan administered by PEBA.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: CONTRACTUAL-NEGOTIATION OF FIRE STATION DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACT WITH SPRATLIN AND SONS

Councilmember Still made a motion to go into executive session. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Davis and unanimously approved.

Council returned to open session.

Councilmember Still made a motion that the City enter into a contract with John W. Spratlin & Son, LLC to provide architectural design and engineering work for the new fire station and that the City Administrator be given authorization to sign the contract. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bragg and unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 3, 2022, REGULAR SCHEDULED CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Councilmember Moody made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2022, regular scheduled City Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember All and unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF ACCEPTING OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY FROM SCDOT, THE SECTION OF MADISON ST. FROM WASHINGTON ST. TO ACADEMY ST. BEHIND THE FIRE STATION

Councilmember Moody made a motion to approve accepting ownership and responsibility from SCDOT for the section of Madison St. from Washington St. to Academy St. behind the fire station . The motion was seconded by Councilmember Still and unanimously approved. The request still has to be approved by SCDOT.

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APPROVAL OF THE FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 2022-4 “AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL AND REPLACE DIVISION 1 AND 2 OF CHAPTER 6 – BUILDING CODE ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BARNWELL, SC”

Councilmember Still made a motion to read the ordinance by title only. The motion was seconded by Councilmember All and unanimously approved. Administrator McEwen read the ordinance by title only. This is required from the South Carolina Building Code Council to update our existing building codes. Councilmember Still made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2022-4. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Davis and unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF THE RESOLUTION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STATE INSURANCE BENEFITS PROGRAM

Councilmember Still said he had received emails this afternoon from one department that wanted to change to the State insurance program and another department that wanted to stay with the current plan. He wanted to hear the views from the other departments before a decision was made by Council. Councilmember Moody asked if a group meeting with all employees could be held to get their input. Administrator McEwen said that the City already did a survey with all employees several months ago. The results showed that about half were satisfied with the current plan and half were not. A decision needed to be made tonight to begin insurance coverage with the State on April 1st. Any delay in a decision would push back the start date. Clerk & Treasurer Kim Vargo reiterated the major differences in the plans. The total yearly premium savings would be over \$70,000 based on the current employee census with over half of that amount being a reduction of employee contributions for dependent coverage. For employees, there would be more upfront costs with the State plan. There would be winners and losers by switching plans depending on how often the benefits are utilized. Discussion followed. Councilmember Still made a motion to table until Council receives more information from all employees. The motion did not receive a second. Councilmember Davis made a motion to approve the resolution to participate in the State insurance benefits program. The motion was seconded by Mayor Rivera. The motion passed 4 to 3 with Councilmembers All, Bragg, and Still voting against the motion.

APPROVAL TO ADD A CREDIT CARD TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES AND ONLINE PURCHASES

Councilmember All made a motion to approve a credit card for the police department for travel expenses and online purchase. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Moody and unanimously approved.

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**APPROVAL OF THE UPDATED TAKE-HOME VEHICLE POLICY FOR THE
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Councilmember All made a motion to approve the updated take home vehicle policy for the police department. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Moody. Discussion followed about the 35-mile radius requirement. The motion passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF THE UPDATED (STATE REQUIRED) POLICY CHANGES FOR THE
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Councilmember Still asked if the limit of 3 miles outside the city limits in the current pursuit policy is still in effect in the amendments. Police Chief Robinson said the updates are an addendum to the current policies required by the State to update language. The current pursuit policy has not changed. Discussion followed about the 3 mile outside the city limit pursuit limitation, including the rationale for the 3-mile limit. Councilmember Moody made a motion to approve the state required policy changes for the police department. The motion was seconded by Councilmember All and unanimously approved.

**DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF THE GUIDELINES FOR BUSINESS AND
CITIZEN OF THE YEAR**

Administrator McEwen provided nomination guidelines for Citizen of the Year and Business of the Year. The guidelines presented for Citizen of the Year presented Council with the option of choosing if the nominee should reside within School District 45 or within the city limits of Barnwell. Discussion followed. Councilmember Still made a motion to approve the presented guidelines with the requirement that the nominee for Citizen of the Year must reside in the city limits of Barnwell. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Moody and unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Water and Sewer (Councilmember Brad All & Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Kinlaw) – No Report

Sanitation and Streets (Mayor Pro Tem Kinlaw & Councilmember Ron Still) – No Report

Parks, Recreation and Tourism (Councilmember Alicia Davis & Jimbo Moody) – Administrator McEwen read a written report from Director Kevin Roberts about fall activities.

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Police (Councilmember Jimbo Moody & Brad All) – No Report

Fire (Councilmember Ryan Bragg & Ron Still and Mayor Rivera) – Fire Chief Dicks gave Council a report on monthly activity. He thanked Council for voting to move forward with the fire station.

Finance and Salary (Councilmembers Ryan Bragg and Alicia Davis) – No Report

Building and Planning (Councilmember Ron Still & Ryan Bragg) – No Report

ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

- The new website is still in progress. It includes fillable forms for citizens and businesses.
- All permitting requests for the new well have been submitted to SCDHEC for approval.
- The renovations to the Council room will not be completed until April.
- There is a volunteer opportunity scheduled for Saturday, November 19th, at 10 am to help decorate the downtown area.
- The Christmas parade and tree lighting are scheduled for Saturday, December 3rd, at 4 pm. The Grand Marshalls will be the Dixie Youth Angels softball team.
- Gave Council some information on suggested logos for the County and the City that have been suggested from the SC National Heritage Corridor to promote outdoor recreation.
- Attended the Retail Academy with the Mayor Rivera and Mr. Bob Snead.

Councilmember Moody asked if there was an update about 115 Derry Lane. The city attorney along with outside counsel are currently working on the issue.

ADJOURN

There was no further business, and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:



Kim Marie Vargo, Clerk & Treasurer

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