

CITY OF BARNWELL, SOUTH CAROLINA

**MINUTES of the SPECIAL CALLED MEETING of BARNWELL CITY COUNCIL
April 15, 2024 – 5:30 pm**

MEETING LOCATION:
130 Main Street, Barnwell, SC 29812

Barnwell City Council met in a Special Called Meeting with Mayor Still presiding.

Council Members Present: Mayor Ron Still, Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Kinlaw, Councilmembers Louis Claytor, Alicia Davis, Ricky Dixon, Wanda Highsmith, and Jana Myers

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Administrator Lynn McEwen, City Attorney Thomas Boulware, Clerk & Treasurer Kim Marie Vargo and Police Chief Michael Butts

Ms. Alexandra Whitbeck from the People Sentinel was also present.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Still called the meeting to order and led in prayer.

CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION RESULTS

Councilmember Myers made a motion to accept the election results. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kinlaw and unanimously approved. Ricky Dixon was the declared winner of City Council District 1.

OATH OF OFFICE FOR NEW COUNCILMEMBER RICKY DIXON

City Attorney Thomas Boulware administered the oath of office to newly elected District 1 Councilman Ricky Dixon.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Stephen Hunter said he had a chance to talk to the Mayor and some Councilmembers and he thinks that Council is on the same page. Their agenda is to make it better for the City of Barnwell. He believes that the CPST package may not be the best but due to timing issues that it

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2024

should be put forward as a joint effort. He also wants Council to rethink committees. They are very important, and members should be selected for their expertise and knowledge as advisors.

Ms. Toni Hutchins said she did not want her taxes going up because of the new fire station and that hopefully the Capital Project Sales Tax would cover this.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION FOR MAYOR PRO TEM

The Mayor opened nominations for Mayor Pro Tem. Councilmember Claytor nominated Peggy Kinlaw and the nomination was seconded by Councilmember Dixon. Councilmember Highsmith nominated Alicia Davis and the nomination was seconded by Councilmember Myers. The nominations were closed. Council voted on the first nomination to elect Councilmember Peggy Kinlaw for Mayor Pro Tem. Councilmember Kinlaw was elected to serve as Mayor Pro Tem in a four to three vote with Mayor Still and Councilmembers Claytor, Dixon, and Kinlaw voting in favor of the election and Councilmembers Davis, Highsmith, and Myers voting against the election. Councilmember Kinlaw will serve as Mayor Pro Tem for the next two years.

UPDATING COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Mayor Still updated the following appointments:

Water & Sewer – Louis Claytor, Jana Myers
Sanitation & Streets – Alicia Davis, Jana Myers
Parks, Recreation, and Tourism – Ricky Dixon, Wanda Highsmith
Police – Ricky Dixon, Peggy Kinlaw
Fire – Louis Claytor, Peggy Kinlaw
Finance & Salary – Alicia Davis, Peggy Kinlaw
Building & Planning – Louis Claytor, Wanda Highsmith
Downtown Revitalization- Ricky Dixon, Jana Myers

APPROVAL OF NEW BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MEMBERS

Administrator McEwen stated that two new members are needed for the Zoning Board of Appeals. Cam Halford and Linda Knapp have agreed to serve on the board. They are both local attorneys. Councilman Dixon made a motion to accept the appointment of Mr. Halford and Ms. Knapp to serve on the board. The motion was seconded by Councilman Claytor. Discussion followed. Councilmember Davis said that with these appointments there would be some gender diversity but still no one of color on the board. She has someone interested so she is not comfortable moving forward without knowing who was coming off the board. Administrator McEwen said that Miles Loadholt is coming off due to health reasons and there is still one unfilled vacancy. The remaining members of the 5 member board are Attorneys Will Alexander, Kent Kirland, and Marty Harvey. There is a possibility that one or more of these may come off in the near future. She explained that a lot of training is necessary for an individual to serve on the

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2024

board. Attorneys do not need to go through this training. Currently one hearing needs to be scheduled and another one in the immediate future. Mayor Still suggested that due to the time constraints that a vote for these individuals be taken tonight and Council revisit Councilmember Davis's concerns and possibly increasing the number of members on the board at a later date. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE CPST II PROJECT PROPOSALS AND PRIORITY OF THE CITY

Councilmember Claytor made a motion to approve the CPST II proposals as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kinlaw. Councilmember Dixon asked if there was a breakdown for equipment purchases and revitalization projects. Mayor Still said that there was a breakdown for equipment purchases but not a specific project list for revitalization projects yet since that was a newly formed committee. Councilmember Myers said the projects would be determined after the committee meets and pinpoints the biggest priorities. The motion passed unanimously.


DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF THE DOWNTOWN PROPOSAL TO SEND TO REPRESENTATION LONNIE HOSEY

Councilmember Highsmith made a motion to approve the downtown proposal to send to Representative Lonnie Hosey. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Davis. Councilmember Myers explained that every developer and outside entity that she has spoken with that was interested in coming to Barnwell say that downtown is not progressing. She met with Representative Hosey to see about funding for downtown revitalization. He told her to get a proposal together and submit it. The proposal includes streetscape and lighting enhancements, facade improvement program, signage and awning replacements, pocket parks and plazas, and paint and surface upgrades. The cost is estimated to be between \$1,000,000 and \$3,000,000. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURN

Councilmember Davis made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Highsmith and unanimously approved.

Submitted by:



Kim Marie Vargo, Clerk & Treasurer

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2024