

**BARNWELL COUNTY COUNCIL
DECEMBER 7, 2010
MINUTES**

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

Barnwell County Council met on December 7, 2010 in Council Chambers at 6:00 PM. Those in attendance were Chairman Thomas L. Williams, Vice Chairman Travis Black, Councilman Freddie Houston, Councilman Lowell Jowers, Councilman David Kenner, Councilman Keith Sloan, Councilman Joe Smith, County Administrator Pickens Williams Jr., and Clerk to Council Kim Futrell. County Attorney J.D. Mosteller was unable to attend.

Call to Order, Invocation, and Quorum

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Williams and an invocation was given by Councilman Jowers. A quorum was declared.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to amend the agenda by adding by an "Executive Session" to discuss a mediation matter. The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the November 9th Council Meeting and the November 19th Special Called Meeting and Council Workshop. The motion passed.

Welcome

Chairman Williams welcomed everyone to the meeting and encouraged the public's attendance at Council Meetings.

Special Presentation

Vice-Chairman Travis Black presented Chairman Thomas Williams with an engraved gavel and a Resolution of Recognition for his service as a member of the Barnwell County Council. Words of appreciation and respect were expressed to Chairman Williams by Council Members.

Resolution of Recognition for Williston-Elko Football Team

Motion was made by Keith Sloan and seconded by Freddie Houston to approve the Resolution of Recognition for Williston-Elko Football Team. The motion passed. The resolution will be presented to the team at the January meeting.

Public Comment

Chairman Williams asked if there were comments from the public concerning agenda items. No comments were received.

Sheriff

Sheriff Carroll expressed his appreciation for Chairman Williams' service to the County. Sheriff Carroll stated that the theft of metal had increased due to its rise in value. He stated a recall had been placed on the product Four Loco and the stores had until January 1, 2011 to pull this product from their shelves and because of this, the previously discussed resolution requesting that our Towns ban this product was unnecessary.

Clerk of Court

Clerk of Court Rhonda McElveen expressed to Chairman Williams that she had enjoyed working with him.

She stated that the Solicitor's Office, instead of waiting until the January Term, had gone to Bamberg the previous week and had been able to hear 11 pleas, and dispose of 36 warrants. She stated that this resulted in a savings to Barnwell County of approximately \$17,000 and that they would continue with this practice as long as they were able. She stated that in the coming week Family Court would be in session three days and would hear 16 cases. She stated that the Registry of Deeds was still scheduled to go online on January 1, 2011. Chairman Williams expressed his appreciation to the Clerk of Court's Office, The Sheriff's Department and the Solicitor's Office for their efforts and stated they had been doing a good job.

Administrator

Administrator Williams expressed his appreciation for Chairman Williams' service and added that he had enjoyed working for him.

In regards to the building move, Administrator Williams said the County had received quotes for the digital storage of records in the Assessor's Office. One quote was approximately \$55,000 for the equipment and approximately \$5,000 for the annual maintenance with the County doing the labor. This quote included the type of microfilm that will allow changes as necessary. Administrator Williams said there would be no recommendation until all of the quotes were in. In regards to the Business Office, Administrator Williams stated that our building inspector, Roger Riley, Debbie Fickling, Timbo Williams, and Mike Hughes had examined three facilities for a potential move. One of the facilities had a bathroom that was inadequate. Curtis Hogg estimated the cost of adding another bathroom at approximately \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Roger Riley visited the Landfill to observe the baler operations and met with Debbie Fickling and Art Hartzog to develop procedures for the safe operation of the baler.

Administrator Williams indicated that all roads included in Road Project 2010 had been paved and the paving of the Barnwell County Hospital parking lot was in process.

Administrator Williams stated that on December 3rd and 4th the various fire departments were testing fire truck pumps. He stated that all of the pumps for Barnwell County had passed inspection and the certifications had been received. Chairman Williams inquired as to whether the County had been reimbursed for election expenses and Administrator Williams responded affirmatively.

Committee Reports

Boards and Commissions

Chairman Williams referred to a letter received by Council in which LSCOG had requested an appointee for the Regional HOME Consortia Technical Committee. Councilman Kenner suggested that Evelyn Coker be asked. Councilman Houston asked whether there would be a conflict due to Ms. Coker serving on the CDC. After discussion, it was decided that there would be no conflict. A motion was made and seconded that Ms. Coker be contacted to ascertain if she was willing to serve. The motion passed.

Chairman Williams suggested that Councilman Sloan be appointed to serve on the Regional Health Care Committee. A motion was made by Councilman Houston to appoint Councilman Sloan and was seconded by Councilman Kenner. The motion passed. Councilman Sloan abstained.

Councilman Houston made a motion and it was seconded by Councilman Sloan that Chairman Williams serve in the minority position on the LSCOG Board. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilman Black-Yes.
Councilman Houston-Yes.
Councilman Jowers-Yes.
Councilman Kenner-Yes.

Councilman Sloan-Yes.
Councilman Smith-Yes.
Chairman Williams-Abstained.

The motion passed.

Councilman Smith asked about the status of the Nursing Home Advisory Board. Chairman Williams responded that the Nursing Home Management had scheduled to meet quarterly. He indicated that the agreement with the Management was that Council would still be able to make an appointment but that it would be advisory only. He indicated there were a few openings and that Council needed to begin getting those appointments made.

It was noted that at the previous Council Meeting there had been a nomination for Albert Pressley to serve in the seat 9 position on the Axis I Board. Motion was made and seconded to approve the nomination of Mr. Pressley. The motion passed.

EDC Committee

There was no report given.

Finance Committee

Councilman Houston stated that Administrator Williams had been instructed to make the necessary FY '10-'11 budget changes for the elected offices that had not responded. Administrator Williams stated that he had met with the Probate Judge and the Treasurer and had been able to make the necessary changes. In the Probate Judge's budget, some line items were reduced and a small amount was deducted from the salary line item. The Treasurer's Office had generated approximately \$5,135 in revenue that, prior to the current year, had not been received or budgeted for. This revenue consisted of a \$75 reimbursement fee which was charged when title searches

were done for property sold at Tax Sales. Administrator Williams indicated that the remaining \$1,300 to \$1,400 still needing to be adjusted was deducted from the salary line item. Councilman Sloan asked if the County was allowing a Department Head with additional revenues to designate those funds specifically for their own budget. He stated that if the County allowed that then it would be required to extend the same courtesy to any elected official showing an increase in revenue. Councilman Sloan stated that he did not think it would be a good precedent to set to allow elected officials which have additional revenue to be able to designate those funds. This matter was tabled until further information could be analyzed and Administrator Williams could meet again with the Treasurer's Office. In regards to the Auditor's Office, Administrator Williams stated that he had told the Auditor on at least two different occasions that he needed assistance in making the necessary budget reductions but that he had received no response. Administrator Williams stated that on the afternoon of this meeting he had been able to reduce the Auditor's budget by examining the FY '09-'10 expenditures, noting the items that were under spent and reflecting this in the FY '10-'11 budget breakdown. He was asked if he had conferred with the Auditor concerning these changes. Administrator Williams responded that the Auditor was not at work on the date of this meeting, that he had spoken with him on two different occasions with no result and did not know what further could be done. Council indicated that the proposed budget changes by Administrator Williams would be presented to the Auditor as a recommendation from Council. Councilman Houston indicated that the Probate Judge's Office was getting by with their present copier but was in dire need of a new one.

Councilman Sloan recommended having the outside auditor meet with the Finance Committee prior to the next Council Meeting in January and that the Acceptance of the FY '08-'09 Audit be tabled until that time.

Financial Update

Administrator Williams stated that the \$25,000 which was listed in revenue account 485 was a reimbursement from the State for the elections. He said Items 495 and 520, were Merchants Inventory and Local Government Funds. Under Recycling, item 626, the negative \$5,686 was the amount paid to Bamberg County for recyclable materials they brought in for '09-'10. This was paid to Bamberg as provided for in the agreement Barnwell County made with Bamberg and Allendale County whereby Barnwell County had received a \$150,000 grant for its baler operation and in return agreed it would accept these counties recyclable materials and return half the proceeds to them.

Government Committee

There was no report given.

Health Care Committee

The "Consideration of Resolution Related to Health Care Improvements" was tabled until the Special Called Meeting scheduled for December 15, 2010 so that Council could obtain feedback from the Medical Staff concerning the proposals.

Housing Committee

There was no report given.

Judicial Committee

There was no report given.

Personnel Committee

Councilman Kenner made a motion to accept the 2011 Holiday Schedule. The motion was seconded by Councilman Houston. The motion passed. Councilman Kenner asked for discussion on the revisions to the personnel manual. Councilman Jowers recommended the pay period be changed to a straight 40-hour week. Councilman Sloan recommended vacation time being listed in terms of hours and not days as the number of hours per day employees work varies. Chairman Williams expressed concern over wordage in the Harassment Policy and the addition of a County Employee being required to obtain permission from the County Administrator to have a second job. Administrator Williams responded this addition had been included based on the recommendation of an outside attorney but that he had reservations about the addition as well. Councilman Jowers recommended the Grievance Committee be removed altogether. Motion was made and seconded to table approval of the revised personnel manual until a later meeting.

Services Committee

There was no report given.

Safety Committee

There was no report given.

Transportation Committee

Vice Chairman Travis Black stated that the next Transportation Committee meeting would be on December 14, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

Old Business

2nd Reading of an Ordinance to Borrow for Capital Projects

Motion was made and seconded to approve the 2nd Reading of an Ordinance to Borrow for Capital Projects. The motion passed.

Acceptance of the FY'08-'09 Audit

The Acceptance of the FY '08-'09 Audit was discussed during the Financial Update.

Recommendation Concerning Auditor, Probate Judge and Treasurer's FY '10-'11 Budgets

The Recommendation Concerning Auditor, Probate Judge, and Treasurer's FY 10-'11 Budgets was discussed during the Financial Update.

New Business

Consideration of Resolution Related to Health Care Improvements

The Consideration of "Resolution Related to Health Care Improvements" was discussed during the HealthCare Committee Update and was tabled until the Special Called Meeting scheduled for December 15, 2010.

Approval of Revised Personnel Manual

The Approval of the Revised Personnel Manual was discussed during the Personnel Committee Update and was tabled to be approved at a later date.

Administration Building Update

Administrator Williams stated that he had spoken with Robbie Sharpton on the afternoon of the date of this meeting. He indicated that Mr. Sharpton had said 75 percent of the roof truss work had been completed which would allow the County some time to make a decision on whether to repair and remodel the existing building or to build a new building. He also said that the 2nd floor should be okay provided no more weight is added. Mr. Sharpton indicated that Tim Rickborn, a structural engineer would be looking at the floor strength very soon. Administrator Williams stated that Mr. Sharpton indicated the designs for repairing the building would take several months so the County would need to let him know its decision as soon as possible. Administrator Williams stated he had a list of pros and cons of constructing a new building versus repairing the existing one. He stated that some cons of a new building would be site location, cost, and the Geo Technical work needing to be completed before plans could be drawn. Administrator Williams stated that both he and Mr. Sharpton agreed that the cost of a new building was not feasible and that it would be best to keep the present building because of the location, the sound structure of the present building and because the cost of a temporary relocation while repairs were being done would be reasonable. He stated that Mr. Sharpton had a template to do prebid interviews once the design was complete. Administrator Williams recommended proceeding with moving Dispatch to the Law Enforcement Center. He stated there would be costs involved, as there would be a need for another HVAC unit as well as wiring a storage shed for 911 sign personnel. Administrator Williams stated that surcharge money could be used for some of these expenses and that the Sheriff's Department was continuing to look for grants. Councilman Sloan asked what the relative range of cost would be to repair the building. Administrator Williams indicated that Mr. Sharpton said it should not exceed \$ 2,000,000. Councilman Sloan asked if a more exact amount could be given. Councilman Smith expressed concern that the County had not received a report on exactly what was wrong with the building. Council expressed that they needed a full report of the damage to the building, the cost of repair, and the estimated time that the repair would take before they could make decisions. Council also indicated that a separate architect should be contacted in regards to what a new building would cost.

Holidays for 2011

The Holidays for 2011 were approved during the Personnel Committee Update.

Executive Session

A motion was made and passed that Council enter into Executive Session to discuss a mediation matter. There was no action taken in Executive Session.

Open Session

Councilman Sloan moved for approval of the settlement agreement as recommended by the County Attorney. Councilman Houston seconded the motion and the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Kim A. Futrell
Clerk to Council/Admin. Asst.



Travis Black
Council Chairman