

**CITY OF BARNWELL, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**MINUTES of the MEETING of BARNWELL CITY COUNCIL  
May 4, 2020 – 5:30PM**

MEETING LOCATION:  
130 Main Street, Barnwell, SC 29812  
Live feed from Facebook Live for Public

**REGULAR SESSION**

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

Council Members Present: Mayor Marcus Rivera, Mayor Pro Tem Pickens Williams Sr., Harris T. Barker, Robert Pattillo, James Moody, and Billy Dozier

Council Members Absent: W.C. Black

Others Present: City Administrator Lynn McEwen, Clerk & Treasurer Kim Vargo, City Attorney Thomas Boulware, Police Chief Brian Johnson, and Recreation Director Pamela Davis.

There was no one present from the media.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Rivera called the meeting to order. Councilman Barker led in prayer.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The public was invited to submit comments before the meeting, but none were submitted.

**PRESENTATION OF 2020/2021 EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL**

Mr. Sam Plexico, from Southeastern Insurance Consultants LLC, informed Council that there would be no rate increases to medical or dental insurance premiums and only a small increase to vision premiums for the City's July 1, 2020 renewal with BCBS of SC. There was also no change in coverage. This is the third year in a row that there have been no increases.

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes  
May 4, 2020

**PRESENTATION OF THE CITY OF BARNWELL 2019 FINANCIAL AUDIT**  
**(MCGREGOR & COMPANY)**

Mr. Jim McGuire of McGregor & Company presented the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019 financial statements. He explained that the audit was again completed later this year because of the delay by the State to release the final pension information needed to complete the report. He referred to the independent auditor's report and informed Council that there were no findings. The auditor's report presented a clean opinion, they found the financial statements were presently fairly in all material respects. He explained the Management's Discussion and Analysis section and recommended that Council read this section for an overview of the financial activities for the year. He then reviewed the various sections of the statements with Council. The General Fund had a decrease in fund balance of \$\$434,816 due to a transfer of \$659,392 to the Capital Project Sales Tax Fund for the completion of the new police station. Without the transfer, the General Fund would have had a positive balance. The Water & Sewer Fund had an increase in net position of \$200,260. The net position in the Water and Sewer Fund includes deductions for depreciation and pension expenses.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 6, 2020 REGULAR SCHEDULED**  
**BARNWELL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

Councilman Pattillo made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2020 regular scheduled Barnwell City Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Williams and unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL TO MOVE FORWARD WITH PLANNED JUNE 26<sup>TH</sup> FIREWORKS**  
**DISPLAY**

Administrator McEwen informed Council that this year's fireworks celebration was scheduled for June 26<sup>th</sup> to coincide with the State Baseball Tournament that would be held at the LPSC. We have not received the final decision but there is a good possibility that this tournament will be cancelled due to COVID-19. She asked for Council's opinion on whether to keep this date or reschedule. Mayor Rivera asked if they could be rescheduled to June 5<sup>th</sup> to coincide with High School Graduation. Ms. McEwen said she would check with the fireworks company. Councilman Dozier made a motion to change the date of the fireworks display to June 5<sup>th</sup>, if possible. If not, the fireworks display will remain as scheduled on June 26<sup>th</sup>. The motion was seconded by Councilman Moody and unanimously approved.

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes  
May 4, 2020

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Water and Sewer (Councilmen Black and Dozier) – The WWTP received a letter from DHEC that they must submit a closeout plan to remove the primary clarifier and trickling filter from the permit or have them refurbished and put back on line. They have been out of service since 1993 when they became obsolete due to the construction of the new activated sludge plant. AECOM is in the process of doing a closeout plan for the City. After it is approved, the demolition will be done inhouse.

Sanitation and Streets (Mayor Pro Tem Williams and Councilman Pattillo) – The Mayor said he received a complaint about the trash along the road to Litchfield. The trash accumulates there from the Walmart parking lot. Administrator McEwen said that the area was scheduled for cleanup at the next MADM. She will talk to Walmart about the issue. Several other problem areas were discussed including overgrown sidewalks. Ms. McEwen said she was working with SCDOT since several of these areas were under their jurisdiction. The DNR is in the process of getting the lake area cleaned up. DNR cuts the grass but the City picks up the trash. Additional trash cans will be ordered with the funds received from the Palmetto Pride Grant to help with the litter problem.

Recreation and Parks (Councilmen Dozier and Moody) – Recreation Director Pamela Davis said her department is cutting grass and weed eating the parks since all programs have been cancelled. She has not received a definite cancellation from local or state baseball representatives. She opened disc golf at Fuller Park. The Lemon Park Sports Complex cannot be opened until hand sanitizing stations and other requirements are met. The recreation committee has met with the architect for the CPST Splash Pad and Restroom Project at Fuller Park. Ms. Davis is working on a grant in addition to the CPST money. Mayor Rivera said he was meeting with the USDA and Promise Zone for grant opportunities.

Police (Councilmen Barker and Black) – Police Chief Brian Johnson updated Council on reports of gunfire in the city limits. Gang activity has slowed down due to efforts by the police department and SLED. He is currently working on updating the policy and procedure manual for the police department. It should be ready for the next Council meeting.

Fire (Councilmen Barker and Moody) – Councilman Moody read a letter from Fire Chief Tony Dicks, who was not in attendance, about his disappointment with the possible postponement on the construction of a new fire station. Mayor Rivera, speaking for the entire council, said that they are very appreciative for all the fire department and volunteers have done over the years.

Finance and Salary (Mayor Pro Tem Williams and Councilman Pattillo) – No Report

Building and Planning (Councilmen Black and Dozier) – No Report

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes  
May 4, 2020

**ADMINISTRATOR’S UPDATE**

- One ton of litter and trash was picked up during the Great American Community Cleanup Challenge over the weekend of April 24<sup>th</sup> thru 26<sup>th</sup>.
- S&S Disposal has a new tracking system on their garbage trucks. Beginning in May, they will no longer go back and pick up carts on a street that they have already serviced. Citizens are supposed to place the cart out the night before their scheduled pickup day. Yard debris should be placed in the same area as the cart is placed and meet the designated requirements. It will not be picked up if it is placed on empty lots. Furniture is not picked up and must be taken to the dump or convenience centers by the homeowner.
- A glass barrier separating the clerks from the public will be constructed in the front lobby before City Hall is open to the public. We will request reimbursement from FEMA
- Gave Council an update on the 2020 Census information.

Mayor Rivera stated that a food drive was held April 18<sup>th</sup>. It was very successful. Food was provided to 227 cars which benefited over 600 people. There will also be a food drive every Monday for 5 weeks for seniors 60 and over sponsored by Generations Unlimited.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Councilman Dozier made a motion to go to into executive session for a legal opinion on financing the Fire Station Project. The motion was seconded by Councilman Moody and unanimously approved.

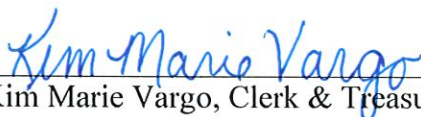
Council returned to open session.

Councilman Williams made a motion that the City spend up to \$350,000 to rehab the existing building, if that can be approved by the state grant, and that plans to build a new fire department be put on hold while we continue to pursue financing. The motion was seconded by Councilman Dozier and unanimously approved.

**ADJOURN**

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

  
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Kim Marie Vargo, Clerk & Treasurer

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes  
May 4, 2020