

CITY OF BARNWELL, SOUTH CAROLINA

**MINUTES of the MEETING of BARNWELL CITY COUNCIL and PUBLIC HEARING
June 5, 2017– 6:30 PM**

MEETING LOCATION:
130 Main Street, Barnwell, SC 29812

REGULAR SESSION

Barnwell City Council met in Regular Session with Mayor Edward Lemon presiding.

Council Members Present: Mayor Edward Lemon, Mayor Pro Tem Pickens Williams Sr., Billy Dozier, Benjamin Duncan, W.C. Black, and Steve Walling

Council Members Absent: Robert Pattillo

Others Present: City Administrator John Zawacki, Clerk & Treasurer Kim Vargo, City Attorney Thomas Boulware, Fire Chief Tony Dicks, Interim Police Chief Brian Johnson, and Community Development Director Lynn McEwen

Mr. Jonathan Vickery of the People Sentinel was also present.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lemon called the meeting to order and led with a prayer.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Roger Riley wanted to check on the status of getting the speed bumps placed in his neighborhood. Administrator Zawacki stated that he had sent a request to SCDOT and was waiting on a response.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 1, 2017 REGULAR SCHEDULED
BARNWELL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

Councilman Walling made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2017 regular scheduled Barnwell City Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Williams and unanimously approved.

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APPROVAL OF INCREASE IN COST OF CITY PROVIDED HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr. Sam Plexico with Southeastern Insurance Consultants explained the new medical insurance rates from Blue Cross Blue Shield to Council. After much negotiations, the July 1st premium increases for the current plans will be 8% for medical, 5% for dental, and no increase for life insurance. He said that due to the Affordable Care Act maximum out of pocket will automatically increase from \$6,850/\$13,700 to \$7,150/\$14,300. The increase in the medical premiums would drop from 8% to 2% if the City chooses to increase the deductible from \$1,000 to \$2,000. A \$2,000 deductible is normal for employers in the area. Mayor Pro Tem Williams informed Council that the finance and salary committee had met with Administrator Zawacki, Clerk & Treasurer Vargo, and Human Resource Director McEwen to discuss the costs for the available options. The committee's recommendation is that the City opt for the medical plan that increases the deductible from \$1,000 to \$2,000 for the individual (from \$2,000 to \$4,000 for the family) to decrease the cost of the premiums for both the City and the employees. The committee also recommends that the City not add the medical increase to those employees with dependent coverage. The increase in dental cost will be added to the premiums for employees with dependent coverage. Due to the increasing of the deductible, the committee recommends the City update its assistance policy on insurance deductibles to the following: If an employee meets the first \$1,000 and turns in the necessary explanation of benefits, they may receive the first \$500 reimbursement during the calendar year. If the employee meets above the \$1,500 threshold up to \$2,000, then they may receive up to the additional \$500. In other words, the employee can receive up to \$1,000 if the full \$2,000 has been met, but can be split into two requests to assist the employee with deductible costs during the year. Mayor Pro Tem Williams made a motion to accept the finance and salary committee's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Dozier. Discussion followed. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

DETERMINING A DATE FOR THE 2017/2018 BUDGET WORKSHOP

A budget workshop was scheduled for 5:30 pm on Thursday, June 22, 2017.

INTEREST IN SIGNING SCE&G COMMUNITY SOLAR RESERVATION FORM

Administrator Zawacki stated that SCE&G has teamed with Community Solar to provide a solar complex which would benefit the City of Barnwell. Council was provided with a copy of the Community Solar Savings Proposal. They want the City to fill out a reservation form which will allow them to get the City's actual electrical usage from SCE&G so they can get an exact cost for the City to subscribe to rent solar panels to cover that usage. The rental contract would be for twenty years. There is no commitment for filling out the reservation form. Zawacki spoke with Scott Neely from SCE&G who said the program is legitimate. Mr. Neely is willing to come and

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explain the program to Council. Councilman Dozier made a motion to fill out the reservation form. The motion was seconded by Councilman Walling and unanimously approved.

MODIFICATION TO DRUG/GANG TASK FORCE FUNDS

There was a major modification to the task force. Personnel costs have been taken out. The cost will decrease to \$1.00 per person for each individual in the City. The funds will be used to maintain equipment used by the Sheriff's Office Investigators for drug and gang detection. The cost will be \$4,750 per year instead of \$30,875. Mayor Pro Tem Williams made a motion to pay the annual amount of \$4,750. The motion was seconded by Councilman Duncan and unanimously approved.

ORCHIDS RIBBON CUTTING JUNE 14, 2017 AT 11:00 AM

Invitations for the ribbon cutting were given to Council.

ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

-Updated Council on the progress of finding a location for the new public safety building. Seven properties were looked at but only the 4.86 acres on Marlboro Ave matched the criteria developed by the Police Chief, Fire Chief, and architect. A drawing was provided showing how the building would be set on the property along with appraisals for the property. Wanted Council approval to have an executive session at the budget workshop to discuss offers on the property. Councilman Dozier discussed another possible location on Jackson St that would keep both the fire department and police department close to the Circle. This location would only be used for a new fire building and the new police building would have to remain at the same location. Mayor Lemon said this could be discussed at the workshop to give everyone time to think about it.

-Received the mosquito grant from DHEC in the amount of \$24,671. We are working with Clemson to prepare a mosquito control plan. The plan and training must be completed prior to initiating the program. We must identify any bee keepers in the city limits and notify them of our fogging plans.

-Gave Council information from MASC on the new legislative changes to the Freedom of Information Act.

-The City has received approval from DHEC to operate the lift station for Orchids and Orchids has received DHEC approval to operate their pretreatment facility. Operation startup is anticipated for this month.

-Sixteen applications have been received for the Police Chief position. Five applications have been recommended for the police committee to review. The committee will meet this week.

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-Barnwell Solar LLC is working on getting their final inspection. They hope to begin operations this month.

-Asked Council if there would be a quorum for the scheduled July 3rd council meeting. Discussion followed. Mayor Pro Tem Williams made a motion to move the scheduled July 3rd council meeting to July 10th. The motion was seconded by Councilman Black and unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Water and Sewer (Councilmen Black and Dozier) – No Report

Sanitation and Streets (Mayor Pro Tem Williams and Councilman Walling) - No Report

Recreation and Parks (Councilmen Pattillo and Walling) – Recreation Director Pamela Davis was working at the LPSC. Administrator Zawacki read her report. Highlights included the Fishing Derby which was a tremendous success. There were 109 participants including many visitors from out of town. Four tagged fish were caught but none were the \$10,000 fish. The farmer’s market opened May 25th. LPSC will host the Dixie Youth Major Boys Tournament June 17th-22nd. LPSC may hold a World Fast Pitch Softball Tournament on September 16, 2017.

Police (Councilmen Black and Duncan) – Interim Police Chief Brian Johnson informed Council that the police department is fully staffed with the hiring of Officer Bozard this month. Mayor Lemon administered the oath of office to Officer Bozard before the Council meeting.

Fire (Councilmen Duncan and Walling) – No Report.

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

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

Community Development & Tourism (Mayor Pro Tem Williams and Councilman Pattillo) – Director Lynn McEwen invited Council to the Independence Day Celebration to be held July 1st at Veteran’s Park from 5:00 to 9:30 pm.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Kim Marie Vargo, Clerk & Treasurer

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