

**CITY OF BARNWELL, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**MINUTES of the SPECIAL CALLED MEETING of the BARNWELL CITY COUNCIL  
July 25, 2019 – 5:30 PM**

MEETING LOCATION  
130 Main Street, Barnwell, SC 29812

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

Council Members Present: Mayor Marcus Rivera, Mayor Pro Tem Pickens Williams Sr., Harris T. Barker, W.C. Black , and Steve Walling

Council Members Absent: Robert Pattillo and Billy Dozier

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

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**UPDATE ON THE 2019-2020 CITY OF BARNWELL BUDGET**

City Clerk & Treasurer Kim Vargo informed Council on the updates to the proposed budget since the budget workshop. The proposed budget includes a 1.6 mill increase in property taxes for operations and a \$2.00 per month per cart increase in garbage fees. A 2% salary increase for employees was also included in the budget.

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 2019-1 RAISE REVENUE AND ADOPT A  
BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF BARNWEL, SC FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2020**

Mayor Pro Tem Williams made a motion to read the ordinance by title only. The motion was seconded by Councilman Black and unanimously approved. Administrator Zawacki read the

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ordinance by title only. Councilman Walling made a motion to accept the first reading of Ordinance 2019-1. The motion was seconded by Councilman Barker and unanimously approved.

### **DISCUSSION ON FLAG VS TACKLE FOOTBALL**

The Mayor acknowledged the individuals in the audience who came to show their support for tackle football. The Mayor allowed Mr. Markel Corley, a graduate of Barnwell High School, to tell Council how much playing football meant to him. Mr. Corley said that tackle football teaches skills that will not be developed with flag football. Players should know how to tackle before they begin playing in Middle School and High School. Kids will want to move if they can't play. He feels that tackle football should be available in this area.

The Mayor said he asked for this to be added to the agenda because he wanted to make sure that everyone was aware of what was at stake and how important this issue is to the community. He felt that Council's original decision to remove tackle football from the recreation program was made because of safety issues. He said that tackle football at that age was not anymore dangerous than any other sport. You can't stop all sports because of the potential danger involved. The coaches need to be trained to enhance the safety of the sport. He stated that football was very important to Barnwell. He feels that Council should leave it to the community and leave the option for parents to decide. He felt that not having tackle football at that age would put children in harm's way because they will not know how to tackle when they are older and bigger. He wanted to move forward and amend the decision. Councilman Black said that the Council supported Recreation Director Pamela Davis in a four to three vote. Now every time someone says something, it goes back on the agenda. He assumed it was over. City Attorney Thomas Boulware informed the Mayor that the item was on the agenda as discussion. If it goes beyond discussion, from a parliamentary standpoint, there would have to be a vote to rescind the prior action, and this would have to be done at the next Council meeting. Councilman Barker said he loves football. He thinks the program keeps the kids off the streets and out of trouble. He thinks the community should decide. Discussion continued. Mayor Pro Tem Williams said that he thinks the decision was in the best interest of the children, not the parents. It has been voted down twice and it should be over with. Councilman Walling said he spearheaded the decision. He tried to bring it up again and it was voted down. He was only one vote and Council decided.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Pro Tem Williams made a motion to go into executive session for a discussion on Personnel/Termination. The motion was seconded by Councilman Black and unanimously approved.

Council returned to open session.

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Councilman Black made a motion to support the City Administrator's decision to terminate the employee. The motion was seconded by councilman Walling 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