

**CITY OF BARNWELL, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**MINUTES of the SPECIAL CALLED MEETING of BARNWELL CITY COUNCIL  
March 29, 2022 – 5:00 pm**

MEETING LOCATION:  
130 Main Street, Barnwell, SC 29812

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

Council Members Present: Mayor Marcus Rivera, Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Kinlaw and Councilmembers Brad All, Ryan Bragg, Alicia Davis, James Moody and Ron Still

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Administrator Lynn McEwen, City Clerk & Treasurer Kim Vargo and City Attorney Thomas Boulware

There press was notified but no members were present.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Rivera called the meeting to order. Councilmember Davis led in prayer.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: PERSONNEL-PARKS, RECREATION AND TOURISM  
DIRECTOR**

Councilmember Moody made a motion to go into executive session. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Davis and unanimously approved.

Council returned to regular session.

Councilmember Still stated that he believes that the entire process for hiring for this position has been fundamentally flawed. Since the position only had six applicants, he feels that they all should have been interviewed by the entire Council and not just the two selected by the recreation committee. If there were a large number of applicants, he could understand a committee only recommending the top eight to ten. Council not only has the authority to hire department heads but also the responsibility to hire the best possible candidate. Interviews with the entire Council would give Council the knowledge that they need to make a decision. This position is one of the most visible and interactive position in our community. A decision to hire should not be rushed into just because the position has been open for a while or because baseball

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes  
March 29, 2022

or any other sport may be starting their season. To deny a councilmember or to deny Council the right to interview a candidate if they choose to do so is not acceptable by me and violates my obligation to my constituents. So, until all the applicants have been brought before the entire Council, and I feel I have all the information necessary to make a competent decision, I will be a "No" vote. If this is how we are going to conduct business in the future, then I am going to ask Council to adopt a policy to conduct interviews for future department heads.

Mayor Rivera stated that the process and protocol used has been followed in the hiring of the department head and as far as the committee was concerned has been the process since before he was Mayor.

Mayor Rivera asked for a motion to select Candidate A. There was no motion.

Councilmember Davis made a motion to select Candidate B. The motion was seconded by Mayor Rivera. The motion failed 5 to 2. Mayor Pro Tem Kinlaw and Councilmembers All, Bragg, Moody, and Still voting against the motion. Mayor Rivera and Councilmember Davis voted for the motion.

### ADJOURN

There was no further business, and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kim Marie Vargo, Clerk & Treasurer