

CITY OF BARNWELL, SOUTH CAROLINA

**MINUTES of the MEETING of BARNWELL CITY COUNCIL
May 6, 2024 – 5:30PM**

MEETING LOCATION:
130 Main Street, Barnwell, SC 29812

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

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Ron Still and Councilmembers Louis Claytor, Alicia Davis, Ricky Dixon, Wanda Highsmith, and Jana Myers

Councilmembers Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Kinlaw

Others Present: City Administrator Lynn McEwen, City Attorney Thomas Boulware, Clerk & Treasurer Kim Marie Vargo, Police Chief Michael Butts, and PR&T Director Kevin Roberts

Ms. Alexandra Whitbeck from the People Sentinel was also present.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Still called the meeting to order. Councilmember Claytor led in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & CIVILITY PLEDGE

Council led the pledge of allegiance and the civility pledge.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Councilmember Myers recognized the Axis 1 Youth Advisory Council. High school student Ke'avian Drake-Childs spoke for the group. The group is made up of students from middle school and high school. Ms. Susan Ingram with Axis 1 is their advisor. Their goal is to work with Axis 1 ECHO (Empowering Communities for Healthy Outcomes) Coalition and to help fight substance abuse. Their projects include helping put vape detectors in school bathrooms and having a community garden with sensory boards.

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2024

POLICE RECOGNITIONS AND SWEARING IN NEW OFFICERS

Police Officers William Beard, Joshua Newman, Justin Thomas, and James Thorpe were sworn in to office by Attorney Thomas Boulware.

Police Chief Michael Butts recognized the following promotions:

William Beard promoted to Corporal

Justin Thomas promoted to Lance Corporal

Xavier Trumpler promoted to Road Sargeant

Officer Trumpler was also recognized by the Chief's Association and the City of Barnwell for helping a citizen get necessary medical help during a welfare check.

PRESENTATION TO POLICE OFFICER STEPHEN JONES' FAMILY

Police Chief Michael Butts presented Janell Jones with a plaque from the SC Criminal Justice Academy and the SC Law Enforcement Officers Association. The plaque was in honor of her husband Officer Stephen Jones who died in September 2021 of complication from contracting COVID 19 in the line of duty.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 1, 2024, REGULAR SCHEDULED CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Councilmember Myers made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2024, regular scheduled City Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Claytor and unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 15, 2024, SPECIAL CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Councilmember Highsmith made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2024, special called City Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Claytor and unanimously approved.

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2024

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 29, 2024, SPECIAL CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Councilmember Davis made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 29, 2024, special called City Council. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Claytor and unanimously approved.

UPDATE ON PROPOSALS FOR SANITATION SERVICE; ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS

Administrator McEwen said only two bids were received from the April 11, 2024 proposals - S&S Disposal and Good Ole Boys Trash & Sanitation. It is her recommendation to reject the two bids, redo the proposal, and rebid the contract. She believes this is in the best interest of the public. The current contract is not up until September so there is still time to rebid. Councilmember Myers made a motion to reject the bids and rebid the contract. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Davis and unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Water and Sewer (Councilmembers Claytor & Myers) – No Report

Sanitation and Streets (Councilmembers Davis & Myers) – Mosquito spraying will begin this week on Tuesday and Thursday. The schedule is on the website.

Parks, Recreation and Tourism (Councilmembers Dixon & Highsmith) – PR&T Director Kevin Roberts thanked everyone for their support during his time as PRT Director. The splash pad is getting checked and repaired as needed. The LPSC has new signage and Collins Park has a new exterior fence. The new pavilion at Fuller Park is near completion. The electrical still needs to be finished. There will be a meeting on June 4th at 5:00 for the Fuller Park master plan.

Police (Mayor Pro Tem Kinlaw & Councilmember Dixon) – Police Chief Michael Butts gave an update on monthly activity. He said the department is fully staffed. Officer Curley will begin full time animal control and code enforcement. A citizen who is a certified drone operator has offered his services if needed.

Fire (Mayor Pro Tem Kinlaw and Councilmember Claytor) – Council received a report on monthly activity. Mayor Still reminded the public that they have to get a burn permit from the fire department if they are going to burn inside the city limits.

Finance and Salary (Mayor Pro Tem Kinlaw & Councilmember Davis) – No Report

Building and Planning (Councilmembers Claytor & Highsmith) – No Report

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2024

Downtown Revitalization (Councilmembers Dixon & Myers) – Councilmember Myers said that she has asked the Youth Advisory Committee to do a downtown mural. The goal is to create an engaging space that will bring more foot traffic into the downtown area. The mural will have a removable frame system. She is looking for grant funding. Councilmember Dixon commended Councilmember Myers for her hard work.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

- Gave an update on the blight program listing the properties that have been demolished and remaining funds.
- There will be a public hearing with the Zoning Board of Appeals tomorrow, Tuesday, May 7th at 6 pm.
- We need to schedule a budget workshop sometime in June. Look for an email about possible dates.
- Move in date is set for June 10th for the fire station. We will plan a soft opening in late June or early July. The grand opening will be set in September or after demolition and parking lot are finished.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Dixon made a motion to enter into Executive Session for Personnel Matters – Discussion of an existing employee to fill position of Interim Parks, Recreation & Tourism Director. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Davis and unanimously approved.

Mayor Still declared the Council was out of executive session.

Councilmember Highsmith made a motion to accept the City Administrator’s recommendation to hire an Interim Director of Parks, Recreation & Tourism for a period of one year and to engage the consulting services of the existing Director for a period of not less than one year upon agreed to terms and conditions. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Dixon and unanimously approved.

ADJOURN

Councilmember Claytor made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Myers and unanimously approved.

Submitted by:



Kim Marie Vargo, Clerk & Treasurer

Barnwell City Council Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2024