

**HAMPTON COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY; OCTOBER 17, 2005; 6:00 P. M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, B. T. DeLOACH BUILDING, HAMPTON, SC**

Hampton County Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, October 17, 2005, 6:00 p. m., Council Chambers, B. T. DeLoach Building, Hampton, South Carolina. Council Member(s) present: Lisa Ball, Lee S. Bowers, Virgin Johnson, Sr.; Margaret S. Parker, Chairman and Willard E. Wilson, Vice Chair. Staff present: Sabrena Posey-Graham, Administrator; Aline Newton, Clerk to Council and A. G. Solomons, Jr., County Attorney. Media present: Mr. Wayne Knuckles, The Hampton County Guardian. The meeting was advertised as prescribed by law.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Parker called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION:

Pastor Kevin Byrd, Chaplain, Hampton County, gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Parker.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

There were no public hearing(s) scheduled.

PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

There were no public comment(s).

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

ADOPTION OF OCTOBER 3, 2005 COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA:

Chairman Parker asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There were none. The agenda was approved by acclamation.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Parker stated that she wanted to put the special meeting minutes and do them together since some of those are very short. She stated that she would like to put the minutes for the special meetings for September 12th (2 special meetings), September 19th and September 20th to approve. She asked Council if there were any changes to those that they would like to address. Council Member Johnson asked about the statement that she made on the 19th. Chairman Parker stated that they had two meetings, a special meeting and a regular meeting; she stated that she was trying to put all the shorter ones together to see if anyone had any corrections or additions. She stated that there were five special meetings. She asked if anyone had any problems, corrections or additions or any changes with those. Chairman Parker stated that if there were no corrections or additions, and then those minutes would stand approved as received. Chairman Parker stated that on September 19th was a regular meeting. She asked if there were any corrections or additions to those. Council Member Wilson stated that some of the things that transpired in the meeting were struck from the minutes. He stated that some the statements that he made were struck out. Chairman Parker asked if this was on the 19th. Chairman Parker stated that Council received a notice. She asked the Clerk if this happened after when they were trying to streamline as recommended that Council only report the sessions was held and the outcome. Chairman Parker asked Council Member Wilson if he had specific conversation, business conducted that is not in there. Council Member Wilson stated that there were things that transpired that were not in there. Council Member Johnson stated that he would like to pass the minutes until he has had a chance to read them. He stated that he read the ones on the 19th, but he has not had an opportunity to read the other ones. Chairman Parker asked if Council Member Johnson if he wanted to wait on the minutes for October 3rd also. He stated that this would be fine. Administrator Graham stated that the minutes for the 19th were in the old format. She stated that if there were some corrections, then it was omitted in error and would need to go back and make those changes. She stated that these were in the old form. Chairman Parker stated that the 19th was the standard form; she asked Council Member Johnson that he felt that something was left out and would like more time. Council Member Johnson stated that he would like more time. Chairman Parker asked if Council Member Johnson could tell the Clerk what it is to have it added. Council Member Wilson stated that he felt that there were some things that he felt was said were not in the minutes. Council Member Ball stated that she felt that the same way. She stated that she felt that there were things that she felt that she said before voting on the millage that she made comments. Council Member Wilson stated that he felt the same. Council Member Ball stated that she did not know if they had gone to a new format. Administrator Graham stated that October 3rd was when they went to the new format; prior to that everything was recorded the same way. Administrator Graham stated that the minutes on the 3rd are much shorter than what they had, but all the other minutes were in the same format that you all have always received. Chairman Parker asked if everyone recall a letter that they received about this. Council Member Ball stated that she did, but she was not sure when it was started. Administrator Graham stated that the change was on the 3rd. Council Member Johnson stated that he does not remember getting a letter. Chairman Parker stated that the letter explained that they were going to try and use the accepted standard form that reports what business was discussed, outcome of the business, and the outcome of the voting. Council Member Johnson stated that he's not saying that he did not get a letter; he stated that he does not remember receiving it. Chairman Parker stated that September 19th, Council wants to defer those until the next month, October 3rd Council Member Wilson stated that he was

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like Council Member Johnson, when Council change, how can you go about leaving out some of the things that take place. He stated that this puts an undue burden on the Clerk, because she will have to decide what to leave in there and what should I take out. He stated that this will be unfair to Council and unfair to the public, because there are some things that the public may want recorded and they don't have the option as Council to say to have it put in the minutes. Chairman Parker stated that the letter that they received was it a statement that he wanted to say in regards to the letter that was sent. Chairman Parker stated that the letter stated that if you had a concern, let the Clerk know. He stated that he would like the full minutes. Chairman Parker stated that this is a form that is the standard and used in other places. She stated that they should use this form to keep the minutes from being so lengthy. Administrator Graham stated that the minutes can be 7 or 8 pages or longer. She stated that when they were reviewing the policies and procedures; she stated that even looking at Robert's Rules of Order to understand proper procedure in terms of keeping minutes. She stated that we were doing what was beyond what were standard minutes. She stated we should be recording only the actions of Council. She stated that we were doing more of a verbatim, word for word, of what everyone said which takes a very long time to prepare. She stated that what they attempted to do was to notify council to get their input about what Robert's Rules of Order says is the appropriate method of recording minutes, which is to record the actions of Council and not word for word, unless a Council member when they made a comment stated that he/she wanted to be in the minutes, then we were not going to list all comments made from everyone, but they wanted to share this with council prior to making that change. She stated that this is why you see that change occurring on the 3rd. She stated that this was after the notice was sent to Council to find out if you all had any opposition to going to that format to simply require the actions of council and any additional comments that if someone made a comments that they wanted to be a part of the minutes to include those comments as well, but to do the proper or appropriate format for minutes and to reduce the amount of work, the time to prepare the 7 and 8 page, length of minutes that was taking some time to get out. Was not getting them out on time always and with other things and our clerk expressed to be in complete silence to do a word for word recording of the minutes? She stated that we had the discussion and asked why are we doing it this way and we looked at Robert's Rules of Order which says that you don't have to do it word for word. You do the appropriate minutes, you simply record the actions not every word that everybody says unless someone indicates that they would like to have their comments recorded in the minutes and that is why you all received a letter to that effect. She stated that they wanted to know if council had a problem with the change to that, and she stated that she believed that the Clerk did not get any response that anyone was opposed to making that change, so that is why you've got your minutes on the 3rd are much shorter than what you have had of any other minutes. Council Member Wilson stated that the minutes are much easier to compile rather than to go through and sift out this or sift out that and he stated that he does not see any reason to sift out anything, because it is public information and he felt that it should be recorded. He stated that he does not have a problem with recording everything that transpired in a meeting. He stated that he has a problem with thing being left out; just like if a citizen that is sitting out there says something, then we want to make sure that it is recorded. He stated that the citizens do not have the same liberties as council to say that they would like their statement recorded. Chairman Parker stated that why don't they discuss this at their next Policies and Procedures meeting. She asked if it would be helpful to go back to the old format. Chairman Parker stated that until that what would Council like to do. Council Member Wilson stated that he would like it to stay the same. He stated that before anything is changed, they

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need to bring back to full council.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentation(s).

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Council voted by secret ballot to appoint to the following boards and commissions:

<u>Arts Council</u>	<u>Economic Development Commission</u>	<u>Library Board</u>
David R. Deming	Ronnie Crosby	Jean E. Small
Jack Hutto	Holbrook Platts	
Dottie Moore		

RESOLUTION(S)

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE GUARD AND RESERVE:

Moved by Council Member Johnson, seconded by Council Member Wilson, to approve the statement of support for the Guard and Reserve. Motion carried unanimously.

ORDINANCES

FIRST (1st) READING T ORDINANCE #2005-008, ROAD SIGN ORDINANCE

Administrator Graham explained that the theft and destruction of county road signs is an epidemic in Hampton County. She stated that the theft and destruction of road signs costs thousands of dollars a year in materials and man hours to replace. Administrator Graham stated that the EMS, Fire, Magistrate's Office, Public Works and Sheriff's Department have been involved in finding a solution to this problem. She stated that all agencies agree this ordinance is the first step in solving the sign issue. She stated that these agencies have reviewed and agreed on this ordinance. Administrator Graham asked that Council accept Ordinance 2005-008, Destroying, Removal and Defacing Hampton County Road Signs. Council Member Ball stated that her husband had a case in which a sign was removed and caused an accident. She stated that she felt that this ordinance is important. **Moved** by Council Member Wilson, seconded by Council Member Ball, to give first (1st) reading to Ordinance #2005-008 by title only. Motion carried.

BIDS

There were no bid(s) scheduled.

COUNCIL'S BRIEFING

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ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Chairman Parker gave an update and stated that the Administration and Finance Committee will meet at 4:30 p. m. on November 7, 2005. She stated that they have one more section to complete.

REPORT(S) TO COUNCIL

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT (MIKE MEYER, FINANCE DIRECTOR):

Mike Meyer, Finance Director, presented the quarterly financial report. He stated that expenditures should be at 25%. He stated that there were no concerns at this time. (See attachment #1 – Financial Report) Council Member Bowers arrived at 6:35 p. m.

COST ESTIMATES FOR MILEY FIRE STATION:

Administrator Graham stated that Council requested and updated report on the cost of a fire substation for the Miley Community. She stated that the current estimated cost was \$150,000 to construct a building and purchase equipment. She stated that the land prep for the site will be provided by County Fire. Administrator Graham stated that the land for the fire station was being donated at one time, and the land donation needed to be confirmed again. She stated that fire protection is provided throughout the County, and that the current Public Protection Survey (PPS) class for Hampton County is a 6/10. She stated that this meant that if you lived within a 5 road miles of a fire station, your classification would be a 6, and all properties beyond 5 road miles would be a 10. Administrator Graham stated that most areas of the County have an ISO class rating of 6 with a few exceptions. She stated that the Miley community has an ISP class rating of 10. Administrator Graham stated that a substation would meet all necessary requirements to reduce the ISO class rating to 6 in this area. She stated that the cost of the substation building and equipment is much lower than the cost to implement a fire station. She stated that the estimated cost for the substation and (used) equipment is \$150,000. Administrator stated that \$150,000 is the cost to construct and equip a fire station in the Miley Community. Administrator Graham stated that it was something that Council could look at during the Fiscal Year 2006-2007 budget process. Council Member Johnson stated that the station should go there as soon as possible. Council Member Wilson stated that Council should implement the plan as soon as possible. Council Member Bowers said that he is in favor but will have to take up next budget year. Council Member Ball stated that they she ere in favor of the fire station but was in agreement with the Administrator as to where the money would come from to pay for it this budget year. **Moved** by Council Member Wilson, seconded by Council Member Johnson, to implement the plan to construct and equip a fire station in the Miley area as soon as financially possible. Motion carried with Council Members Johnson, Parker and Wilson voting “Yay” and Council Member Ball voting “Nay”. Council Member Bowers stated that he abstained until he could receive further information regarding the matter. Motion carried.

CONTRACT WITH ARC FOR DELINQUENT EMS COLLECTIONS:

Mr. Mike Meyer, Finance Director, came before Council made presentation regarding contracting with Associated Receivable Consultants (ARC) go after delinquent EMS collections. Mr. Meyer stated that the compensation to ARC will be based only on a percent of their collections. He stated

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that EMS will continue to pursue collections for the first 90 days before turning them over to ARC. He stated that ARC will not be compensated for amounts collected through the set-off dept program. Mr. Meyer stated that the county attorney has reviewed the contract. He stated that the county can terminate the contract with a 90 day written notice. He stated that references supportive of ARC were obtained from other clients (Beaufort County, Aiken County and Medicare). Mr. Meyer stated that ARC's compensation is 18% of collections on items from 91-120 days and 28% thereafter. Mr. Meyers stated that there are \$670,500 (six hundred seventy thousand, five hundred dollars) in EMS past due amounts 91 days and older for the past three years. Mr. Meyer stated that out-of-state collections cannot be made through the debt-set-off program. Council had several questions regarding the collections and asked that a representative from the company come to a meeting in order that council can have their questions answered. **Moved** by Council Member Wilson, seconded by Council Member Johnson, to table the matter until a representative from Associated Receivable Consultants (ARC) can come to a council meeting. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Meyer and Administrator Graham stated that they will ask that a representative come to answer any questions that Council may have.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES' (EMS) OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUEST:

Administrator Graham stated that there is a request from EMS for out of state travel to attend training. She stated that the Sweet Software EMS billing program was purchased in 1994, and staff has not attended any training conferences since the software was purchased. She stated that Atlanta is the closest the conference will come to our area. She stated that EMS is working to improve collections rate on EMS billing, the staff receiving training can benefit. She stated that the upcoming changes in Medicare and Medicare appeals will also be discussed the conference. Administrator Graham stated that funds were not budgeted for this, but there is no request for funding. She stated that EMS will move funds from one line item to another to cover the costs. Administrator Graham stated that since it is out of state, it requires council's approval. Administrator Graham stated that the cost for the conference is \$1,860.00 (one thousand, eight hundred sixty dollars). **Moved** by Council Member Bowers, seconded by Council Member Ball, to approve the administrator's recommendation for EMS clerical staff to attend training on the EMS billing program, Sweet Soft, in Atlanta, Georgia. Council Member Johnson asked why there was not a Black on the EMS. He asked what the qualifications to become an EMT were. Mr. Rossomme, EMS Director, explained the requirements to Council. Administrator Graham stated that she could not tell him why this was not the case in the past, but there is a young lady employed by EMS by the name of Latasha Bing. Motion carried unanimously.

NOTIFICATION OF JAIL ADMINISTRATOR HIRED

Administrator Graham stated that the Jail Administrator, Charlie Grant, has been hired and is scheduled to start work on October 24, 2005. Council Member Wilson asked if the county had bought the new Jail Administrator a car. Administrator Graham stated that not to her knowledge. He stated that people have been asking him about a black, Crown Vic being driven by the new jail administrator. Administrator Graham stated that she will check it out.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session scheduled.

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ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Council Member Johnson, seconded by Council Member Bowers, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Chairman Parker adjourned the meeting at 7:33 p. m.