

**CITY OF DARLINGTON
BUDGET WORK SESSION
MONDAY, APRIL 17, 2017 AT 6:00 PM**

The City of Darlington held a Budget Work Session in the Old Council Chambers on Monday, April 17, 2017 at 6:00 PM. Present at the meeting: Mayor Gloria C. Hines, City Manager Howard Garland; Council Members: Mayor Pro-Tem Coleman Cannon, Carolyn Bruce, John Segars, Elaine Reed, John Milling and Bryant Gardner. Others in attendance included: Mrs. Karen Carroll, Calvin Holloman, Mr. Lee Andrews, Mr. Alex Gainey.

Mayor Hines called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and Mayor Pro-Tem Coleman Cannon gave the invocation.

Mr. Garland said things are a little different this year because SC Retirement contributions for employers and employees are going up significantly over the next 5 years. He said over the next three years we will not have things to cut, so we'll have to make hard decisions whether we will cut employees or services if we are going to stay part of the retirement system. He told Council that the budgets they are not complete because the health insurance is not included in the figures. He said our anniversary year for insurance begins August 1st, so we'll have to wait and see what rates Mr. Moore gives us. Mayor Hines asked if Mr. Moore knew we were meeting tonight and Mr. Garland said the insurance company will not give us a quote that far in advance of our insurance renewal date. Mr. Garland said we don't have any idea about our millage yet because they haven't released the population numbers. Mr. Garland said he's proposing a \$3.00 increase for water and sewer fees and increases in the street and sanitation department for trash pickup. He reminded Council they voted to take \$1.50 from the sanitation fee amount and put it into the Street and Sanitation Capital Improvement Fund. Mr. Garland said they will be going line item by line item in each department tonight and once department heads finish with their presentation, then Council can ask questions. Mr. Garland said he is requesting a 2% increase for raises this year.

STREET, SANITATION & GARAGE DEPARTMENTS– MS. KAREN CARROLL

Mrs. Karen Carroll went over the Street Department budget line item by line items. Mr. Garland said they will hire some people to put on the grass cutting crew this summer. Mrs. Carroll said they use the Disabilities and Special Needs Board (DSN) to help with grass maintenance and they have been doing a great job. She said she contacted DSN Board to see if they can get two separate crews to help with grass cutting and that way we will be able to maintain things with the employees that we have and wouldn't have to increase employees. Ms. Carroll went over department 640 (Sanitation Dept.) line item by line item. Mr. Garland said Council approved a capital fund for the Street and Sanitation Department and now it has a little over \$24,000. He told Council he has a proposal from the same company that provided us with the new fire truck to provide the City with two cherry pickers and a rear loader garbage truck for a cost of \$415,154. He said they gave us three options and recommends that we take option #3 which will be 10 annual payments of \$50,423.18 with the first payment being due in July, 2018. Mr. Garland told Council he hopes they would approve this and they are also hoping to reduce the cost by \$50,000 because they applied for a USDA grant to offset \$50,000 of the cost of one of the cherry pickers. He said for the 2018 payment, some of the money would come out of the regular street department budget and some out of the street and sanitation capital fund. He said getting a new truck will enable us to take our 2008 truck offline and use it as a backup. Mrs. Carroll went over Department 660 (Garage). Mr. Garland said we currently have one person in the Garage Department even though it's slated for two people so they will be looking for a full-time mechanic assistant. Councilman Gardner said they went around and checked sidewalks and hopefully they are going to do something with that this year. Mr. Garland said in 2014 there was a company that went around and shaved the sidewalks that were lifted so that everything would be level. He said they tried this on four or five streets and it was successful, but they didn't have the money to do it city wide. He said back in 2014 the cost was approximately \$150,000 to do this. Mr. Garland said someone reached out to Councilman Gardner on Face Book about the issue of walking their children/dogs and tripping on the sidewalk, so they asked him if he could fix the problem. Mr. Garland said Councilman Gardner then asked that question of us and he was told about the study that was done in 2014 which Mrs. Lisa Rock presented to Council. He said funds for this can come from the Hospitality Tax if Council so desires because at the present time we don't have money in that department to do this. Councilwoman Elaine Reed asked if the City can fix a sidewalk and Mr. Garland said in small parts, we can. Councilman Gardner said he grinds concrete all the time and if it's ½

inch to 2 inches he can take a couple of our guys and show them how to use a hand grinder. He said if the concrete is 4 inches or more we probably can fix it ourselves and save \$150,000. Mr. Garland said the sidewalks are owned by SCDOT and if we do too much they have a problem.

Councilwoman Reed asked if the request to repair the sidewalk was for a large area. Mr. Garland said it was a request to fix all of the sidewalks in town. He said if we do some of the sidewalks you have to take the tree roots out and then you have to remove the tree and some of the large Darlington Oaks we have could cost as much as \$15,000-\$20,000 to remove.

Councilman Gardner said we have a lot of concerns and issues, but if we have a tree maybe we need to go to a different sidewalk or section and try to accomplish something instead of passing the buck to next year and next year's budget. He asked if we could spend \$50,000 this year and \$50,000 next year, etc. Mayor Hines said people came to Council a year or so ago and nobody want to touch the trees. They wanted the sidewalks fixed, but they didn't want to touch the trees. Councilman Gardner said we can't stop doing what we need to do because of one citizen and ignoring \$8,000.

Councilman Segars suggested prioritizing some of the sidewalks and then do some grinding and leave them shaved. He said why put new concrete if the tree roots are going to eventually push the sidewalks up again. Councilman Gardner said if you grind the sidewalks down to make everything flush, you will need a little concrete or texture make it strong again. Mr. Garland suggested that we reach out to the company that does this work and have them come before Council and see what they can do. He said we can give them a figure and let them come back with a proposal, Councilman Gardner suggested that we spend \$50,000 and do the grinding ourselves.

Councilwoman Reed asked if "grinding" is something that our employees do? Ms. Carroll and Mr. Calvin Holloman said they don't do any grinding. (Council continued to discuss the capability of our employees doing the grinding work and also if we need to contact SCDOT). Ms. Carroll said she would contact SCDOT in reference to sidewalk repair. Councilman Milling asked Mr. Garland about City-owned and State-owned streets. Mr. Garland told Council he gave each of them a list of all the City-owned streets.

(Council continued to discuss until 7:00 PM).

RECREATION DEPARTMENT – MR. LEE ANDREWS

Mr. Andrews went over department 700 in detail. Mr. Garland said Williamson Park will get some type of large gift from someone's living estate. He said the Attorney who called him didn't tell him who it was or

how much it was. Mr. Andrews went over Department 750. He said the new Athletic Director Mr. Brantley Jett wanted to run the concession stand for basketball season just to see if they could do it. He said they were able to stock the concession using City funds and once the concession was up and running they were able to pay the City back, pay everybody that worked at the concession, pay for all of the food and then made approximately \$1,500. Mr. Andrews said they are looking at taking everything over next year. He said if they do this next year all baseball and softball will be played at Blue Street until they can get the new area fixed. He said that will essentially shut down B.A. Gary for next season, but it will be an overflow place if we need to use it. He said nothing has been decided as to the type of ball it's going to be. Mayor Hines asked Mr. Andrews where does the profit for the concessions, Patsy Hathcock and the gym rental show in the budget. Mr. Andrews said everything was going to #4405 -Sports Registration, but a new account has since been created - #4407 for the concession money so he can keep track of the profits. He said all of the other fees are in the sports registration line item. Councilwoman Reed told Mr. Andrews he mentioned taking over the leagues and wanted to know who's running it now. Mr. Andrews said it's run independently between Little League and their board, Dixie Youth Board and Dixie Youth Softball Board. (Council continued to discuss recreation department budgets)

FIRE DEPARTMENT – CHIEF PAT CAVANAUGH

Chief Cavanaugh went over the Fire Department budget and explained to Council the need for new radios. Mr. Garland said in July, 2018 he will be applying for a CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) for a new fire station. He said CDBG will pay 90% of the cost of a new fire station. He said they will have to find some property, but they are trying to get some donated. Mr. Garland said if Palmetto Fire District goes “belly up”, we would take over the second station on Ebenezer Road. Council discussed areas for annexation into the Fire District. Councilman Milling asked Chief Cavanaugh who is doing their physicals and Chief Cavanaugh said HMES, but he has reached out to Genesis Health Care and hopefully they will give us a competitive rate. Councilman Milling said he has a Board meeting with them on Thursday night and if Chief Cavanaugh gives him something, he will present it to them.

MR. ALEX GAINEY – CODES ENFORCEMENT

Mr. Gainey told Council he intends to talk about a Demolition Assistance Program at the May meeting. He said if we have a property that's been

condemned and they posted it, sent them notices, etc. and they don't do anything about it, at that point he can send them a citation for \$500.00 and give them a court date. Mr. Gainey said if Council approves the demolition assistance program, when a person comes to court, we will tell them they can pay the \$500 to the City and tear your own property down or if you enter into the demolition assistance program, the person would write a check to the City for \$500 and sign paperwork authorizing the City to tear the property down. Councilman Milling wanted to know what we would do if a person doesn't show up for court. Mr. Garland said we will probably have to get a lien on their property. Councilman Milling said to check with the Auditor or the County Treasurer and see if we will have a problem putting liens on property. Councilman Segars asked if the City would want to get into the demolition business as far as buying a backhoe or equipment. Mr. Gainey said you can buy a used track hoe for \$15,000 - \$20,000 and if you have a slow time here at work and you have an employee than can run a track hoe, let him do the demolition and send it to the landfill. Mayor Hines and Mr. Garland asked Mr. Gainey about lead based paint, asbestos and mold and Mr. Gainey said if you have a landfill that's regulated for asbestos and lead paint, you can send any construction crew you want to. Mr. Garland said we need to look at this and check it out.

MR. HOWARD GARLAND – COMMUNITY PROMOTIONS

Mr. Garland said he's trying something different this year and suggested that 550-06 (Contingency) fund be taken out of his hands and put into the hands of Council. He said each Council member will have \$1,000 to use for non-profits and if they want to combine their money with another Council member they can do so. Councilman Gardner said his idea would be to take the entire budgeted amount of \$28,600 and divide it by seven and they each will fund what they want to. Councilpersons Segars and Bruce said they don't think this would be a good idea. Councilwoman Reed said she thinks we need to increase the amount we are giving PDRTA. Councilman Milling said with what other people are contributing he has questions in his mind as to whether they have given us a true picture of what they are actually getting. Councilman Segars said if riders are paying only \$1.00, maybe if PDRTA increase their fees this would help. Councilman Milling said he wants a little more information.

Mr. Garland gave Council a copy of an advertisement for bids for roof work to be presented at the next meeting.

Upon motion of Councilman Bryant Gardner, seconded by Councilwoman Carolyn Bruce, the meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk & Treasurer