

**CITY OF DARLINGTON
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY MAY 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

The City of Darlington held a Budget Work Session in the Old Council Chambers on Thursday, May 16, 2019 at 6:00 PM. Present at the meeting: Mayor Gloria C. Hines, City Manager Howard Garland; Council Members: Mayor Pro-Tem Carolyn Bruce, John Segars, Elaine Reed, John Milling, Sheila Baccus and Bryant Gardner. Others in attendance included: City Attorney Kevin Etheridge, Ms. Karen Carroll and Mr. Calvin Holloman.

Mayor Hines called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. She said they have things to address for the Special Meeting which is First Reading on Ordinance 2019-10 (101 Exchange Street).

FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2019-10 – 101 EXCHANGE STREET

Mayor Hines said we can't do anything about that until we have First Reading, so they can sell the property and we can get our \$16,000 and the lady that gave us the property we will give her \$8,000. **Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to accept First Reading on Ordinance 2019-10 – 101 Exchange Street. Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. All approved the motion. Upon motion of Councilman John Milling, seconded by Councilman Bryant Gardner, the Special Meeting ended at 6:06 PM. All approved the motion.**

BUDGET WORK SESSION 6:17 PM

The Budget Work Session opened with prayer by Councilwoman Elaine Reed.

STREET, SANITATION & GARAGE BUDGETS - MRS. KAREN CARROLL

Mrs. Carroll went over her budget line items explaining any increases or decreases. Mayor Hines asked Mrs. Carroll if they were doing any better with keeping up with small hand tools and Mrs. Carroll said George is over the grass crew and the small hand tools are managed by him. She said George keeps a log and he hands them out when needed. Mrs. Carroll said there's better security with this now. Mrs. Carroll said she decreased the

radio supply line item because most of the employees rather use their personal cellphones for communication rather than the company radios. Councilman Gardner wanted to know about the employees' rain gear. Mrs. Carroll said they must replace them periodically because they rip and tear when they are climbing. She said at this point she probably could supply them again with rain gear from the boots to the jackets. Mrs. Carroll said in her 630-279-line item is used to pay for the disability workers, the cable for the internet and anything that doesn't fit into the other categories goes here. Councilwoman Elaine Reed asked about the Palmer Pre-Release line item and both Mayor Hines and Mr. Garland said it was a great thing until something bad happened. Mayor Hines said when we had Palmer we had great control over overgrown lots and cutting of the City because they worked and now since we don't have them and don't have enough staff, that's why we can't keep up. Mr. Garland said it's the same thing with the prison farm. He said we had eleven from the prison farm that we use to use when they had a full slot, but we only get one now. Mrs. Carroll said she called about two weeks ago, but they don't have enough people. Councilman Gardner asked, "Why can't we use Palmer Pre-Release again"? Mr. Garland told Councilman Gardner he would tell him after the meeting. Councilman Milling wanted to know what "storm drain extension" was. Mr. Garland said, "It's not so much for an extension, but let's say like the one that's near your house that collapsed a while back, that's near the two convenience stores at the bottom of the hill on Cashua we had to have that rebuilt". Councilwoman Reed asked, "So it's more what, maintenance"? Mr. Garland said it's just there in case we have repairs. If DOT won't do it, we have to do it". Mr. Garland said the overall total of the 630 budget includes a \$1.00 increase of the sanitation fee. Mr. Garland told Council if they want to pave some roads they could increase it to \$2.00. He said a \$1.00 increase would be \$35,196; \$2.00 would bring in another \$35,196. Mrs. Carroll asked if the sanitation fee was for residential and Mr. Garland said residential and commercial. Mr. Carroll told Mr. Garland she was going to suggest that he raise the fee but raise the commercial \$1.00 more than the residential. Mr. Garland said you'll only raise about \$4,000 on the commercial because you don't have that many customers. Mrs. Carroll asked if we could do both and raise the commercial more than residential. Mr. Garland said if you raise both to \$2.00, then that would bring in another \$35,196 because he already has \$35,196 plugged into the budget. Councilman Gardner asked, "There's no way we can go about this without raising rates"? Mr. Garland said, "If you've got the need it's either that or cut from somewhere else. It's either cut jobs or services from somewhere

else. Mrs. Carroll said raise the residential to \$23.00 and raise the commercial to \$25.00. She said she don't think that's unreasonable for a business. Councilman Milling asked how does this compare to other communities and what they are doing? Mayor Hines said Mr. Garland will research that, so they will know. Mr. Garland said if you want to pave some of these concerns you're going to have to raise the rate. Councilman Gardner said, "I've got no interest in raising taxes, but you obviously sometimes have to raise taxes to be able to get what we need to get done". Councilman Gardner said, "With that being said I'm always worried about taxes or new taxes and then they get eaten up for twenty years". He said he don't want what happened with the storm water where we raised the rate and then we ate it up for fifteen-twenty-plus years. Councilman Gardner said, if we're to do this he wants us to plan on using this for the street department for repairing the roads for the next couple of years. Mr. Garland said another option would be to go back and redo our general fund bond. He said we probably have about 560,000 that's available out of that from the general obligation bond that we did a couple of years ago. Mr. Garland said our bonding capacity went up when we had the reassessment of properties by the County, but then again once that's done your money is gone and the bond payment would probably be for twenty years. Mr. Garland said the final choice would be to take the reserve fund and spend it on paving. Mr. Garland said we just took 40% out of it to pay for the cutter and the vector truck, so there's probably about \$50,000 left. Mr. Garland said we could charge a \$50 road fee on everybody's property taxes every year. Mr. Garland said the money would have to be earmarked for specifically for paving city roads. Councilman Gardner said, "But you could do a onetime fee to any property owner in the city of \$50 per year for roads and Mr. Garland said, he thinks so, but he would have to research it. Mayor Hines said, "What about if we do it or however many we do, write them down where everybody can see them and then when we do our budget next year, add on some more". Mr. Garland said, "Remember the list that we give you every year or two that shows you where the listings are, that might be the best way to do it." Councilwoman Sheila Baccus said, "You want to do \$50"? She said, "You went from \$1.00 per water bill which is only \$12.00 per year to \$50.00"? Mr. Garland said I was just giving you options. Councilwoman Baccus said you went from \$2.00 and that was only \$24.00 and then you went from \$24.00 to \$50.00. Councilwoman Baccus said that's a lot to hit somebody with. Councilman Gardner said you could do a onetime payment of \$25.00. He said there's a variety of ways to do it, we're just discussing options. Councilwoman Baccus said, "I think \$25.00 is

reasonable, but \$50.00 is just too much”. Mr. Garland went over the sanitation and garage departments. Mrs. Carroll said the expenses on residential recycling is an average of \$3,500 a year. She said this is when we take recycling to Sonoco. She said this is very minimal in her opinion. Ms. Carroll said she thinks we need to hold onto our residential recycling. She said Pluff Mud does our commercial recycling and we don’t get any revenue from them. We pay them \$4,830 for a service and we don’t get anything back from them. Mr. Garland said we could cut that and save a little bit on money. Ms. Carroll said they have e-waste which is the electronics which they must collect separately. She said they just started with this new service for them to come around and collect once a quarter. Ms. Carroll said if it holds like they think it will, it’s going to cost approximately \$6,000 to dispose of the e-waste. Councilwoman Reed asked, “With the e-waste, all I’ve got to do is put the waste by the road”? Ms. Carroll said you put it on the road and we manage a couple times every other week to go around and collect the e-waste. Councilman Gardner said, “I didn’t think we could do that. I thought you couldn’t put anything on the side of the road except trash cans”? Ms. Carroll said, “e-waste because it has to be picked up separately and dispersed separately”. Councilwoman Reed said, “I just want to get this clear because I’ve got a bunch I need to put out there and different ones come to me”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “You mean only tv’s, right”? Mr. Garland said you can put computers too. Ms. Carroll said do not put it all out there at one time and don’t readily just spread this word out because this is not a dedicated position and people are taking it to the recycling stations themselves. Councilwoman Bruce wanted to know what happens if we do away with commercial recycling. Mr. Garland said the City could have to do it. Ms. Carroll said it’s only thirty-five customers. She said now that we’ve got the trailer and the camera, they need a heavy-duty truck to pull the trailer. Councilwoman Reed asked, “Who has that, and Ms. Carroll said nobody, we need to get one”. Mayor Hines said, “I thought they said when they were talking that they had one because we asked that question”? Mr. Garland said maybe the water department might have one. Ms. Carroll said for them to pull the trailer with the camera, they’re going to need a truck. Ms. Carroll said one of the other things they would like to do is enclose the work area where Kendrick is and air condition and heat it. Ms. Carroll said they would like to have another zero-turn lawn mower. They will probably have to order more roll carts as well. Ms. Carroll said they have two cherry pickers and two new garbage trucks. Councilwoman Bruce asked about the number of staff they have, the description says nine people. Ms. Carroll said they are slotted for nine, but

they have six people working. Councilman Gardner said, “We’ve been talking about fining people for not bringing trash cans in and I’ve got no interest in that, but we also brought up about fining people for leaving trash on the side of the road (mattresses and stuff like that). He asked if that was something they wanted to revisit and come up with a plan on? Ms. Carroll said, “you guys are doing a really good job of helping us get that word out that we do not pick up mattresses, furniture, etc. She said as far as backyard pickup on the trash cans, we don’t just arbitrarily pick up a senior citizen’s can from the backyard unless it’s a disabled person. Councilwoman Reed said, “the right-of-way is grown up from Tallulah Street to Washington Street”. Ms. Carroll told her whenever you see that just call her.

Councilman Milling asked, “Is a 1% sales tax type thing referendum that got voted down by the County, are we eligible to do something like that”? Mr. Garland said we were eligible for part of that, but the County sold it as just being for the courthouse. Mr. Garland said the capability is there to do that, but the school district controls everything. Councilman Milling asked if we would have to do it under the umbrella of the County and Mr. Garland said correct. Mr. Garland said, “As long as they have that need for the courthouse that kind of sucks all of the air out of the room there”. Mayor Hines said, “Think about the holes over there near the school by Gandy pool”. Mr. Andrews said that’s because of 18-wheelers coming through going to Dixie Cup. Mr. Andrews said we need to have DOT put a sign up to stop trucks from coming through there. Mayor Hines asked Mr. Garland to call or write a letter to DOT. Mr. Garland said he’ll call them because a letter will just make them mad.

PARKS & RECREATION – MR. LEE ANDREWS

Mr. Andrews said he didn’t have a lot of changes to his budget. Mayor Hines asked about Gandy Pool and wanted to know why no money was in the budget line item (700-220.1). Mr. Garland said because it was taken away. He said the County won’t let them touch it. Mr. Andrews said the County Administrator does not want his personnel involved with the pool because of the liability issue. Mayor said, “So that means the pool won’t open this summer”? Mr. Garland said, “It will open”. Mayor Hines asked, “Under who”? Mr. Garland said, “The same folks that did it last year”. Mayor Hines said, “Well, what about the problems we had with them”? Mr. Garland said, “If you want to talk about this in executive session, I’ll be glad to do that”. Mr. Andrews said that’s the only pool place around here that will run a pool. Councilwoman Bruce said, So, explain this to me, you work for the County”? Mr. Andrews said, “I am paid by the County and work in

Lamar, Society Hill, and Hartsville”. Mr. Andrews said his whole staff works for the County except for the maintenance workers, they are city employees. Mr. Andrews said his line items stayed pretty much the same. He said there’s no prisoners at the prison farm and it is taking a toll on the staff. He said it’s hard for his guys because there’s only three of them. Mr. Andrews said they have been able to use a lot of part-time help especially at night and he will use some of the same part-time help during the day. Councilwoman Bruce asked about the tennis program line item. Mr. Andrews said it was used to help the high school with tennis, but they use it now if there’s a busted waterline or something needs to be painted. Mr. Andrews said he just added a hit backboard and it can be used for pickleball or tennis. He said they may look at making it bigger if there’s a need for it. He said they may have \$200 in the whole project. Councilman Gardner asked if they could put one at the Terrance Carraway Park at the basketball court. Mr. Andrews said they can look at it and see. Mr. Andrews went over Department 725 (Parks). He said Eddie and Willie are doing a great job working in the park. He said last year they did \$11,000 in concessions and they will probably do a little better this year. He said they are going to have to look at getting the fryer fixed or get a new one for the Dug-Out Grill. He said they had two fields going last night and they made \$256 in concession for two hours. With the fryer they can turn anywhere from \$600-\$800 a night when they’ve got all the fields going. (this is just during ball season) Mr. Andrews said they are always buying equipment which costs a lot and the baseball league itself is at 500 kids now. He said they are going to host three state tournaments in Darlington. Councilwoman Reed wanted to know how much the fryer costs because one of her organizations want to do something for the youth. Mr. Andrews said they just got two fryers in Lamar and they were about \$2,500 each. Councilman Milling asked about registration fees. Mr. Andrews said our fees are lower than anybody else’s fees (Hartsville, Florence & surrounding areas). He said football registration is \$40; basketball is \$25; baseball and softball registration is \$35. He said the trips that the recreation department sponsor is minimal in cost as well. Mr. Garland asked Mr. Andrews about the registration numbers for Little League. Mr. Andrews said we were at 475-480 last year and we’re over 500 this year. He said where people posted negative comments on Facebook last year saying it would never happen and it would fail, it’s far from a failure. Councilman Gardner asked if they were getting the organization down this year? Mr. Andrews said, “From last year, absolutely”. He said it’s run in-house now, and Mr. Brantley Jett is the President. He said they have put a board in place of people that are out there and involved in the baseball

league. Councilman Gardner said, “I know that we subsidize some of our county players who have kids playing in the programs. Is there any way we can adjust the rate so that if you live in the City you pay \$50 or \$40 for your kids to sign up”? “If they live in the County, you pay \$50 or \$60”. Mr. Andrews said Hartsville does this now. Mr. Andrews said, “It hurts the program because if we have a registration fee of \$25 and this one’s paying \$31, the people that are on the fence will say they’re not going to do that”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “The way you’re doing it now, it’s actually growing right”? Mr. Andrews said, “Yes ma’am and they’re spending money at the ballfield”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “So keep doing what you’re doing”. Mr. Andrews said Pee Dee Vikings will be coming back again this year. He said they used Virgil Wells for practice before the season started. He said it will be the same deal that they had last year. They will rent the field at \$150 and they will provide entertainment to the community. Mr. Andrews said they give back to the program by coaching and they will be doing camps this year. Mr. Andrews said he talked with a tree company about cleaning the area around the ditch that runs through the three acres that the City brought from the school district. Mr. Garland asked if we’ll get any money for the timber? Mr. Andrews said he’ll talk with him and see. Councilwoman Baccus asked if they put the air conditioning in the building yet”? Mr. Andrews said he doesn’t know, but he will find out. Mr. Garland said they will need to have executive session in two weeks about the option on the property. Mr. Garland said he added \$1,300 to the contingency fund and if Council wants to change it around, let him know where they want the money to go for the different organizations, but they must stay within the \$24,500 budget.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion of Councilman Segars, seconded by Councilwoman Reed, to go into Executive Session at 7:30 PM to discuss Municipal Court Judge. Darlington City Council will not vote after Executive Session.

Upon motion of Councilman Gardner, seconded by Councilwoman Bruce to end Executive Session at 7:51 PM.

Next Budget Work Session will be Tuesday May 28, 2019, 6:00 PM.

Upon motion of Councilman Milling, seconded by Councilwoman Bruce, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk & Treasurer