

**CITY OF DARLINGTON
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 1, 2017 – 6:30 PM**

PRESENT AT MEETING:

Mayor Gloria Hines, City Manager, Mr. Howard Garland and Councilpersons: Elaine Reed, Coleman Cannon, John Segars, Carolyn Bruce, John Milling and Bryant Gardner. Also, present: Mrs. Lisa Rock, City Attorney Kevin Etheridge, Mr. Pat Cavanaugh, Police Chief Danny Watson, Mr. Alex Gainey, Ms. Sheila Jones, Ms. Jannie Lathan, Ms. Betty Jackson, Mr. Thomas C. Sawyer, Mrs. Harriett Hobbs, Mr. Curtis Boyd, Officer Dominick Robinson, Mr. James Cooper, Mr. Willie Pearson, Mr. Roosevelt Scott, Mr. Linwood Epps, Ms. Rhonda Brown, Mr. Leroy Jackson, Ms. Linda Byrd, Mr. Sylvester Hudson, Mr. Roger Gore, Mr. John Wallace, Ms. Judy Alexander, Mr. Billy Hill, Mrs. Ouida Page, Mr. Don Blakney, Mr. Ben Williamson, Mr. Eric Hodges, Ms. Stephanie Johnson, Mr. Will Isgett, and other visitors.

NEWS REPORTERS

Also present were News Reporters from the News & Press and the Morning News. News Stations TV13 & TV15.

PRAYER

Councilman Coleman Cannon did the invocation which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Milling said since Council can't vote in executive session, it would be more appropriate to put "Council returned to open session at 8:07 PM" instead of talking about a vote. Councilman Gardner said on the July 27, 2017 minutes he would like to have a transcript of the meeting because he doesn't feel the minutes accurately represent the minutes. **Councilman Gardner made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 3, 2017, July 11, 2017 meeting and July 27, 2017 meeting with the necessary changes. Councilwoman Bruce seconded the motion. All approved the motion.**

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Upon motion of Councilwoman Reed, seconded by Councilman Cannon to approve the meeting agenda. All approved the motion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: TO DISCUSS THE CITY MANAGER’S CONTRACT

Mayor Hines said City Council may or may not vote after executive session. She said they probably won’t be in there any longer than five or ten minutes.

Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion to go into executive session at 6:34 PM to discuss the City Manager’s contract. She said Darlington City Council may or may not vote after the executive session.

Councilman Cannon seconded the motion. All approved the motion.

(Only Councilmembers were allowed to attend executive session)

Back in Regular Session at 6:50 PM

Mayor Hines said after careful consideration they have decided to extend the City Manager’s contract for one more year.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

A) DARLINGTON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ASSOCIATION – MRS. LISA ROCK

Mrs. Rock said this Saturday from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM the Market on Darlington Square will feature a Back-to-School Bash with backpack giveaway and bounce houses thanks to the Housing Authority of Darlington as well as more than 35 vendors. Mrs. Rock said their “Bringing Downtown Alive!” Free Concert series will continue and conclude Friday, September 1, 2017 at Liberty Lane from 7:00 – 10:00 PM with the Recollections Band performing. There will be food and beverages will be available for purchase. She said businesses interested in participating as sponsors or vendors are still welcome. She said they are accepting merchandise vendors for this night as well. Mrs. Rock said the bands for the 2017 Yam Jam concert on Saturday, October 14, 2017: Level 10 & Eagle Wing Band. Mrs. Rock said any business, civic group, church or individual who would like to be a part of any of the events or projects can contact her office for more information.

B) GREATER DARLINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE –MRS. HARRIETT HOBBS

Mrs. Hobbs said the Chamber is continuing to take orders for the “I Love Darlington” banners. She said they have negotiated the price down to \$85.00 apiece. She is encouraging all businesses whether they are a chamber member or not to purchase one. Mrs. Hobbs said she would like for the banners to be up for the car haulers parade and extend it through the race. She said they want that to be their one voice. Mrs. Hobbs said they have the cozies on sale and they will eventually have the car stickers on sale. She said the Chamber now has an Interim Director, Ms. Elizabeth Gainey, while they search for a permanent Executive Director. Mrs. Hobbs said the Chamber will host a “Lunch & Learn” at the Darlington County Library on August 24, 2017 at 12:30 PM. Mrs. Hobbs said the featured speaker will be Ms. Esther Wagoner from S.C. Palmetto Pride. She will be speaking about the impact of litter on the community. She encouraged Councilmembers to join in this “Lunch & Learn”. Mrs. Hobbs said despite the rain, this year’s Freedom Fest was the most profitable event they have ever had in the history of the Chamber. She said they raised a total of \$40,000.

CITIZENS WISHING TO SPEAK BEFORE COUNCIL

A MR. BEN WILLIAMSON

Mr. Williamson said he was sad yesterday to hear that there was so much and so deep bad feeling on the City Council. He congratulated Council for coming to a decision tonight. Mr. Williamson said he doesn’t think Darlington can continue the progress that we’ve been making lately if the feeling is as bad as he heard yesterday. He asked Council to consider hiring a Mediator so that when difficult questions and issues come up they can get some professional help. He encouraged Council to do this and congratulate them at the same time.

B) MS. DORIS DAVIS

Ms. Davis said the lot beside her at 319 North Main Street it has needed to be clean for several years. She said she’s been to a lot of people trying to help. She said she’s had snakes at her back door and some of her neighbors have had problems as well. Ms. Davis said she doesn’t know that they are coming from there, but that’s a good place for them. She said grass is all over the sidewalks and they are not being cleaned up. Mr. Garland said for those who don’t know 319 North Main is the old Crouch/Norwood Insurance property. He said the people that own the property is a bank in Marion, SC and they contracted with someone to clean the property but they only clean the front part of the property and not the back part. Mr. Garland

said Ms. Davis' concern is why don't they clean the back. Mr. Garland said he has relayed this information to the bank today and will follow up with a letter from Codes Enforcement. Mayor Hines asked Mr. Garland when will he let Ms. Davis know something about this. Mr. Garland said he will let Ms. Davis know something when he hears from the bank.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) SECOND READING ON ORDINANCE 2017-26 – 909 PEARL STREET (165-05-01-065) PROPERTY PURCHASE \$25,000

Mr. Garland said this building was built in 1950 but it was built right over a storm drain, so as a part of our \$2 million storm drain upgrade for that area we need that property to upgrade the storm drain. Mr. Garland said the Council on Aging is moving to the old Watson Chevrolet spot so we'll let them use that area for parking. He said Subway will be able to use it for parking as well. **Councilwoman Reed made a motion to approve Second Reading on Ordinance 2017-26 – 909 Pearl Street (165-05-01-065) property purchase for \$25,000. Councilwoman Bruce seconded the motion. All approved the motion.**

B) APPROVAL RESIDENTIAL HOUSING DEMOLITION LIST

Mayor Hines said the housing list showed properties listed on the left have already been sent letters and the ones listed on the right are the ones where the letters have not been sent out yet. Mr. Alex Gainey said the entire list needs to be approved so they can do a title search on them. He said once they get the title search back then we will go from there and decide which ones they will put on the list. Mr. Garland said as a reminder to Council, there may be some that are taken off because once we advertise it, we have some owners of property that will come in and take care of it themselves. **Councilman Gardner made a motion that we approve the Residential Housing Demolition List. Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion.** Councilman Cannon wanted to know if the list will be prioritized. Mayor Hines told him we haven't gotten that far yet, we have to get it approved first. Mr. Garland suggested that we have Mr. Gainey come to the September 5th meeting or either have a work session so Council can see what they want to prioritize. He said a lot of the properties are in some neighborhoods, but there are DHEC guidelines that Council needs to be aware of and educated on. **All approved the motion.**

Mr. Garland asked Mayor Hines to table Item 7C – Enterprise Fleet Proposed Vehicle Lease because we’re going to try and get bids from other vendors.

NEW BUSINESS

A) WARD REGISTRATION DATES 12 NOON AUGUST 24, 2017 TO 12 NOON SEPTEMBER 7, 2017

(For Information)

B) FIRST READING ON ORDINANCE 2017-27 (410 PEARL STREET – 165-02-02-022) PROPERTY SALE \$100,000 TO GENESIS HEALTHCARE

Councilman Coleman Cannon made a motion for First Reading on Ordinance 2017-27 – 410 Pearl Street (165-02-02-022) property sale \$100,000 to Genesis Health Care. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Mr. Milling said Genesis HealthCare is a client and he has not had any discussion with them about this proposed sale nor has he participated in any Council discussions. He recused himself from voting on this agenda item. (Mr. Milling signed Conflict of Interest form). **All approved the motion.**

C) MR. CURTIS BOYD – DARLINGTON MULTI-USE TRAIL SYSTEM (CENTRAL PARK SOUTH)

Mr. Boyd showed picture of the proposed hiking trail loop)
Mr. Boyd said last week Mr. Gardner brought up information about the multi-use trail but he thinks it’s a misunderstanding about what the purpose of it was. He said it’s not necessarily a playground and he wanted to emphasize that. He said he runs a lot and he much rather run outside than be inside on a treadmill. He said when he run through the town he has about 3-4 miles that he can through the sidewalks of Darlington. Mr. Boyd said a lot of areas that he goes to and run in different states they have rail trails that may be 26-30 miles long. Mr. Boyd said Councilman Bryant Gardner brought up to him about the option of trying to restore the trail and he thinks Council is considering moving forward with at least looking at the easements for it. Mr. Boyd said his understanding is there is money allotted from the hospitality taxes which could possibly be used for this trail. He said he sent an email about the benefits of a trail to the councilpersons whose email addresses he found online. He said you might ask if the rail trail is going to bring money into the City. He said if you look at statistics a

lot of people that make a lot of money love to bike, they love to run and do things with their families outside. He said the rail trail is multi-purpose and you'll get people out into the community. Mr. Boyd said a couple people in the area that are saying they are willing to donate land and he is actually willing to donate part of his property to connect to the trail to have something as far as exercise equipment along with the trail. He said the big part of the trail that he sees is in three phases. He said the first phase would only go 3 miles, but once we get into second and third phase it will actually connect pretty much all of Darlington. Mr. Boyd said their objective is to get people out and enjoying things and the outdoors. He said someone asked earlier about Williamson Park, and not seeing a lot activity as far as new people coming in and he wanted to say that we don't necessarily see a lot of people and need people coming into our town. Mr. Boyd said we don't really see a lot of growth but we've got to do something to bring people in so that when they go out they can do something with their child safely. He said the places he's been to before they have people riding their bikes, riding scooters, skateboards, roller blades, pushing strollers, walking the dogs, etc. He said Darlington can also have this which in turn will help the community all the way around. He told Council the email he sent them shows a lot of points that show us how to bring money back into the City. Mr. Boyd thanked Council for working on the easements and if possible, start with Phase 1. (Councilman Cannon left at 7:15 PM) Mayor Hines asked Mr. Boyd if the trail was in purple on the map. Councilman Gardner said the trail is in purple and green is Swift Creek. Mr. Boyd said his understanding is that the 3-mile trail will connect to Williamson Park (He showed area on the map). Mr. Boyd said it's a long process, but he understands the funds are there to be able to start phase 1 and this is without any outside contributions. He said he will be glad to assist in any way to help with raising funds for anything extra that's needed. Mayor Hines asked how many easements are involved in this. Councilman Gardner said we need the railroad and two other property owners. He said everybody else is onboard for the first phase loop. Councilman Gardner showed the proposed trail on the map. Councilman Gardner said with this trail, the only thing he would add to it beyond the trail is multi-use capacity of it with outdoor fitness center parks and property owners are already onboard with that side of it. He said they are in discussions with having another area that includes a dog park, playground (0-3 years) & then a playground for (3-12 years); and also, discussions about a disc golf course and some other things for the older kids. He said with this park there will be 3 to 4 different parks with different uses depending on what your uses are.

D) VIRGIL WELLS SURVEY RESULTS – MR. BRANTLEY JETT

Mr. Jett passed out a copy of the area that they want the school district to donate to the City. He said everything in green is what the school district owns, but they are asking for everything in orange. Mr. Jett said to the right of the school is the football stadium and behind the school to the right (in front of B.A. Gary Gym-the field in front of the pool) is approximately 12 acres. He said across the street where the ballfields are now (the tennis courts and an access road) is approximately 4 acres. Mr. Jett said they are asking the school district for approximately 15 acres, but they won't have an answer until the School Board meets on August 14, 2017. Mr. Garland encouraged Council members to attend this meeting if they can. He said Council has attended their meetings before to show our support for various projects. He said it's important that they see us. Mr. Jett said they are asking the school for everything except 30' around the whole campus. Mr. Jett said with that we will enter an agreement that we will build parking lots and the school district will be able to use them when we're not there. Mr. Garland suggested that we have a work session to discuss what our league set is going to look like.

E) BOARDS/COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

Mrs. Rock said Ms. Lou Kirchen would like to serve on the Planning Commission. **Upon motion of Councilman John Segars, seconded by Councilwoman Elaine Reed, to appoint Ms. Lou Kirchen to the Planning Commission, which unanimously carried.** Mrs. Rock said **Mr. Francis Parnell would like to be appointed to the Planning Commission. Upon motion of Councilwoman Elaine Reed, seconded by Councilwoman Carolyn Bruce, to appoint Mr. Francis Parnell to the Planning Commission, which unanimously carried.** Mrs. Rock said that fills the Planning Commission for now. Mrs. Rock said Mr. Steve Abbott would like to serve on the Historic Landmarks Commission. **Upon motion of Councilwoman Carolyn Bruce, seconded by Councilman Bryant Gardner, to appoint Mr. Steve Abbott to the Historical Landmarks Commission, which unanimously carried.** Mrs. Rock said Mrs. Catherine Howle would like to serve on the Historical Landmarks Commission. **Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to accept Ms. Catherine Howle to serve on the Historic Landmarks Commission. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Carolyn Bruce, which unanimously carried.** Mrs. Rock said they still need people on the Tree Board because they don't have enough to have a meeting. She told Council if they know someone who's interested in trees, let her know. Mayor Hines asked Mrs.

Rock to tell the audience what the Tree Board does. Mrs. Rock said one of the things the Tree Board does is decide what kind of tree planting projects that they do as far as types of trees, tree selection and if there are any issues with cutting down a large historic tree, the Tree Board will be the ones to decide that kind of issue. Ms. Rock said the Tree Board meets quarterly.

F) GANDY POOL – (Info Only) – COUNCILWOMAN ELAINE REED

Councilwoman Reed said in view of us moving to upgrade the recreation complex she would like all of our recreational activities to be under the recreation department. She said right now the Gandy Pool is under the operation of the Police Department. She said she wants Council to discuss this because she knows there was a reason for the change, but she thinks that reason has maybe changed. Councilwoman Reed said so we can operate properly she would like for us to consider putting all of our activities under the recreation department. Mr. Garland said he was ok with doing that.

G) CITY WEBSITE – COUNCILWOMAN ELAINE REED

Councilwoman Reed said recently Council attended the MASC Annual Meeting and one of the sessions was about how to connect with our cities and first impressions and one of the topics was about our website. She said the exercise was to go on your own website and when she went on the City's website, it was outdated. Councilwoman Reed said she wants Council to address this to update it and get it in line with most other cities. She said there is a lot of outdated information on our site and it was kind of difficult to find answers when they asked a particular question. Councilman Gardner said he would love to and address this at a place where citizens can go add a comment. He said Hartsville has an application and a website where they can go and report issues in the City (potholes, leaks, etc.). Mayor Hines said that would be great. Councilman Gardner said this is something that will give our citizens a way to communicate and make and submit comments/complaints.

H) MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – COUNCILMAN BRYANT GARDNER

Councilman Gardner said he would like to ask that they start getting their monthly financial statements put back into their council folders. He said he understands a previous councilwoman had gotten that approved and he would like to get that going again.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Councilman Gardner, seconded by Councilwoman Bruce, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk & Treasurer