

**CITY OF DARLINGTON
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING AT 6:30 PM
TUESDAY – JANUARY 8, 2019**

PRESENT AT MEETING:

Mayor Gloria Hines, City Manager, Mr. Howard Garland and Councilpersons: John Segars, Carolyn Bruce, Sheila Baccus, Bryant Gardner, Elaine Reed and John Milling. Also, present: Mrs. Lisa Rock, City Attorney Kevin Etheridge, Police Chief Kelvin Washington, Building Official Alex Gainey, Mr. Kinsaul, Mrs. Betty Jackson, Ms. Jannie Lathan, Mr. Lee Andrews, Ms. Anna DeWitt, Ms. Rosena James, Mr. Steve Abbott, Ms. Gladys Jules, Mr. Robert Thomas, Mr. Corey Milling, Mr. Donald Gilliard, Mr. Perry Simon, his wife Mrs. Fannie Simon and their daughters, Mr. James Cooper and other visitors.

NEWS REPORTERS

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman John Segars did the invocation which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion of Councilwoman Carolyn Bruce, Seconded by Councilwoman Elaine Reed to approve the Minutes of December 4, 2018. All approved the motion.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion to approve the meeting agenda for January 8, 2019. The motion was seconded by Councilman Bryant Gardner. All approved the motion.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

A) DARLINGTON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ASSOCIATION – MRS. LISA ROCK

Mrs. Rock said the DDRA has selected its leadership team for 2019. Mr. Bobby Kilgo will serve as President, Mr. Pete Dennis as Vice-President and

Mr. David Vaughan as Treasurer. Mrs. Rock said they had a successful Shop Darlington Contest during the holidays with more than \$11,000 being spent in connection with the contest. Mrs. Rock said the three winners have been contacted and will be appearing in the News & Press and on their website www.buildupdarlington.org. she said they are working to expand their membership. Mrs. Rock said the cost is minimal and the benefits to your group or business are not. She said members can share their news on their site and distribute through their News Alert System via text message and email to people interested in Darlington as well as TV stations, radio stations and newspapers. Mrs. Rock said they can come and take a photo, or you can share what you already have. She said this allows you to share employee recognitions, new products, sales, special hours, events and more. Mrs. Rock said interested parties should give them a call or send them an email at info@buildupdarlington.org and they will feature your news or add your events to our calendar. She said memberships for most businesses are \$150 for the calendar year, \$100 for civic groups, churches and nonprofits, and \$50 for individuals. Mrs. Rock said another benefit of the DDRA comes each month with an invitation to breakfast for businesses to network and learn more about the DDRA programs and give feedback for future projects. These are monthly members' Breakfast at 8:00 AM on the last Wednesday of the month at Takis Diner. Breakfast is provided for member businesses at no charge. Nonmembers who would like to attend the meeting are welcome for a nominal donation of \$5 towards the meal. Mrs. Rock said these meeting continue monthly through October. Mrs. Rock said they are getting ready to plan for their Spring concerts "Bringing Downtown Alive" and told Council if they know of anyone who wants to be involved with the concert series they will have a concert committee planning meeting at 6:00 PM Thursday, January 17th at Mamma Mia's Italian Kitchen on Ward Street. Mrs. Rock said they are planning on reconfiguring the events to have the band moved onto the street since they are closing that first block of Pearl Street and they are working with Duke Energy right now to get the cost finalized. Mrs. Rock told Council if they know any vendors or businesses who want to be involved, etc., let them know about this meeting and give them her contact information. She told Council included in their packets is the dates for all the Membership Meetings and other upcoming events for the year that are already on the calendar.

B) GREATER DARLINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE –

Mrs. Harriett Hobbs was not present.

CITIZENS WISHING TO SPEAK BEFORE COUNCIL (5 MINUTES PER PERSON)

Mr. Donald Gilliard said, “At your November 13, 2018 Council Meeting a citizen took issue with an op ad that he published in the newspaper and proceeded to misrepresent to you what was printed as well as making disparaging remarks about my character. I understand she also presented you a copy of her remarks; likewise, tonight I have a copy of my remarks for you. This copy however in my assessment outlines the facts. Because an error of with the President of U.S. has been fact checked for making over 6,000 false misleading statements since taking office, some people think that they can just lie, say things that are not true and impugn another’s character without being held accountable. Well, the reality is, that is just not true, so tonight I’m here to state the truth, set the record straight. So here are the facts: I’m a political strategist and I have managed and worked on numerous political campaigns. Most recently Senator Ronnie Sapp’s campaign, congressional Candidate Mal Hyman, The City of Georgetown Mayor Brendon Barber. And yes, I supported our distinguished Mayor Hines as well as Ms. Bruce in her campaign as we worked to turn out voters to support both of them-Ms. Hines and Ms. Bruce. However, as I said, I’ll continue to say and believe that she sold out the citizens of Darlington as well as the other three Councilmembers that supported what I believe to be both along racial lines. Lathan Consulting Corp. a Black owned female local business had come before City Council and present her credentials to be approved as a grant writer for the City of Darlington. The Mayor and City Council approved Lathan Consulting as a grant writer at their July 2011 Council meeting. Since then, Lathan Consulting has successfully written and managed two major grants for the City of Darlington totaling approximately \$1,000,000. Davis & Brown, a white male owned company, not a local business, keep that in mind, not a local Darlington business had come before the City Council and Davis & Brown did not have to do the same. Why? I think we all know the answer. Instead, they were just given the contract to not only write the grant, do the engineering design, do the construction management, but to manage all the funds and contract related to the publicly funded grant. Who does that? I think it only can happen in Darlington, SC and it has to stop. What is the current status of submission of the RIA Grant Application by Davis & Brown? I think we all know the answer to that question as well. They did not submit the grant application, and nothing has changed. Sewage is still backing up because of this malicious vote that some of you all took. This is affecting the minority community. And the action that you took is that Black communities have to

have raw sewage because of the actions that you took. Whatever reason it is, nothing has changed. I say shame on you for allowing the situation that pose a significant health risk to the citizens of Darlington to continue to exist. From what I see, Lathan Consulting has been under constant contact with some of you sitting on the council now and from the other white racist simply, simply because she is Black. You sought out and published what this Black owned company earned for many years with the City of Darlington, but you did not seek out and publish the millions of dollars, and I mean millions, Davis & Brown got from the City of Darlington. Racism is alive in Darlington and it's time for more people in Darlington to speak out on this cancerous nature. Please, rest assured, I will, by the way you do not have to be a resident of Darlington to speak out against racism and injustice or to have an op-ed published in the local News & Press. So, you can stop trying to bully the local press. We will continue to monitor, we'll continue to look, and we simply ask for fairness and to erase racism. Thank you".

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE 2019-01 MASC SETOFF DEBT ORDINANCE

Councilman John Milling made a motion to approve Second Reading of Ordinance 2019-01 – MASC Setoff Debt Ordinance. Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. All approved the motion.

B) CAMERA, ROOT CUTTER FOR VACTOR TRUCK

Mayor Hines said last month Council discussed about the vactor truck we have here in Darlington and it's done an awesome job with helping with water in the ditches and catch basins, but the workers expressed the need for a camera and a root cutter. Mayor Hines asked Mr. Kinsaul if he had an update for them tonight. Mr. Kinsaul said he was supposed to get a demo and the camera company will be here at 9:00 in the morning at the Street Department to demonstrate the small camera. He said the \$47,000 camera quote from last month is now \$77,000. Mayor Hines asked Mr. Kinsaul if he just found out this. Mr. Kinsaul said he just got the information. Mr. Kinsaul said he just called the guy late yesterday afternoon and he said he was coming into town. Mayor Hines said she won't be able to make it but told those who can to try and be there. Mayor Hines told Mr. Kinsaul to try and video it for them so the ones that can't make it can look at it.

Councilwoman Baccus said if somebody is coming to present something to us we need a longer notice than less than 10 hours. Mr. Kinsaul said the guy is coming through the area and he might be able to get him back at a later

date. Mayor Hines said, “I would appreciate it if you can get him back at another time. Councilman Milling said, “If he is willing to come by Ms. Reed said she’s available, you’ll have a better feel after it’s done; why don’t we have him come by and then for the rest of us, ask him if he will give us some dates where we might have a week or ten days’ notice. Mr. Kinsaul said this is the actual factory rep and he doesn’t know how often he is here. Councilman Milling asked Mr. Kinsaul to see what he can find out about helping line up something. Mr. Kinsaul said whether the company from Sumter can come and bring one and demo it without the factory rep, he doesn’t know. Mayor Hines asked Mr. Kinsaul to get the information and let them know in time so they can see it too. Mr. Kinsaul said the other ones were sold. Mr. Kinsaul said they brought a couple of the ones that were on sale, but they sold out before the end of the year and they said there were no more available.

NEW BUSINESS

A) RECOGNITION FOR MR. PERRY SIMON: COMMUNITY SHOE SHOP

Mayor Hines presented Mr. Perry Simon and his wife Mrs. Fannie Simon with a “Key to The City of Darlington” for his sixty plus years’ service in the community. Mr. Perry Simon said he took the shoe shop over from a WWI Veteran, Mr. Curly Ervin. He said the time he took over the shop veterans didn’t have much to do. Mr. Simon said when they were being discharged from WWII, the government opened up a way for soldiers to make a living and that’s why he went into shoe repair. He said he was called to come down to Claflin College for something, but he didn’t know what, but he knew it wasn’t for an education because he hadn’t graduated high school. Mr. Simon said once he got to Claflin College he found out that the government had set up a rehabilitation center there. He said the rehabilitation center was set up to find something for WWII veterans to do. He said while he was there Ms. Fannie McPherson was one of the workers in the office at Claflin and another gentleman was there, but he didn’t know his name. Mr. Simon said the gentleman asked him if he knew anybody in Darlington that might would be running a shoe shop. He said, “Yes, I knew a gentleman in Darlington”. Mr. Simon said the gentleman said, “Well, when you go back to Darlington ask him if he would take you in and train you to do shoe repair”. Mr. Simon said he caught the bus back to Darlington and went to Mr. Curly Ervin at his shoe shop located at 105 S. Main Street and asked him would he take him in and let him learn how to repair shoes.

He said Mr. Ervin said, “Well, I could use some help”. Mr. Simon said, “Ok then, will you give me a try”. Mr. Ervin said, “Yeah, I believe I will”. Mr. Simon said that was in 1950, so that’s when he got started into shoe repair. Mr. Simon said things were tough for soldiers coming out of WWII. He said wasn’t so easy then like it is now. It wasn’t so easy for young men to take on work or jobs. He said the government did not forget them because they set up training sessions for young men to take training to learn trades and to learn how to do different types of things. Mr. Simon said his brother went into brick masonry and a lot more fellows went into brick mason, but some fellows seem to go into things just to get the money. Mr. Simon said, “My brother took up brick mason that’s why the shop is sitting where it’s sitting now because he learned how to lay bricks and finish cement”. “I had two brothers, one was a carpenter and one was a brick mason and that’s how I got that little shop built down there on Dargan Street- 407 Dargan Street”. “My two brothers built the building and it’s still sitting where it’s sitting now, it hasn’t changed any since they built it and I haven’t changed a whole lot”. He said some people are asking now, “Why are you going out of business, but they don’t realize that even steel wears out”. He said the machines that he uses, wears out. Mr. Simon said, “I was able to figure another way how to work with shoes, repair shoes and put on soles, heels and whatnot other than using a machine”. He said, “Sometimes you find you can’t do a job you learn how to do it differently from the way you usually do it, so that’s why now time has come for me to say I’ve done enough”. Mr. Simon said, “But, I’m not completely worn out”. Mr. Simon said he has four wonderful children (three females with him tonight). Mr. Simon said he has one son and it would be wonderful if he was living in Darlington, so he could take over the shoe shop, but he lives in Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Simon said he’s just thankful to be here. Pictures were taken of Mr. Perry, Mrs. Fannie and their three daughters.

B) UPDATE PLAYGROUNDS CONSTRUCTION – MR. LEE ANDREWS

Mr. Andrews thanked Mr. Perry Simon for everything he has done. Mr. Andrews said it’s fitting to follow the Community Shoe Shop with the two community playgrounds that we’re getting ready to build. Mr. Andrews said everything to build the playgrounds has been delivered. He said Mr. Chris Webb who the contractor is out of Mullins, SC and he will be in Columbia today and tomorrow and then he will be on a 10-day deal in Myrtle Beach where he’s building a park there. Mr. Andrews said he will then come here and the first park that he builds will be the Officer Terrance Carraway Park

over on Magnolia Street. He will then start work on the soon to be named park. The ticket booth at Virgil Wells is almost finished. Mr. Andrews said he's getting a quote on the air conditioning to give to the Mayor because Mayo Alumni is interested in donating money toward finishing this off because that was not in the quote. Mr. Andrews said once we get the build guy here we are going to lay out where the playground can be where it will be most utilized and where it will fit. He said he has preliminary drawings of how they will set up each place, parking areas and fencing off some areas, picnic areas, etc. He said the exciting thing is the equipment is here and it's just a matter of hitting the ground. Mr. Andrews said both playgrounds will be done by Spring time this year. Mayor Hines said she was told the ticket booth was sort of high. Mr. Andrews said the contractor has cut the window down and if it's a little bit too high, they will cut it down some more. Mayor Hines asked, "What about the water out there, what can we do about that?" Mr. Andrews said he met with the engineers and the problem seems to be on the railroad property that is behind Virgil Wells Stadium. He said there is a ditch on railroad property that we can't go on to clear out because it's not on our property. He said he thinks we've tried to fix that before, and he talked with Mr. Garland about it, but to get on that property and fix it will cost us a \$6,000 permit to dig that out. Mr. Andrews said what we need is some sunshine and some wind right now to get that ditch moving and then we can go on our property and clear out what we have to get that stuff out the ballfields. Mayor Hines said, "I was going down S. Main Street and saw this company and they were working on the railroad, so she got out and talked with them and they told her (she was looking on the pole) not to get that number go to wherever the railroad is, there's a different number on that pole". She said they told her they have different numbers on each pole so when you call that number they have a number on the bottom that you can tell them about. She asked, "Do you think if we go down there and look at the number....Mr. Andrews said, "We can go look and try, it's worth a try". Mayor Hines said, "Look and try and call them because they say if you got an emergency, that is an emergency". Mr. Andrews said I think what he was saying is that there's a drainage ditch on that piece of property that's not cleaned out and they won't let us on their property to work because if somebody gets hurt then they feel like they are liable. Mayor Hines asked Mr. Andrews if he thinks we can call them, and he said, "Yes". Mr. Garland asked if it was CSX or Wyoming & Genesee? Mr. Andrews said he thinks it's CSX. Someone asked where is it? Mr. Andrews said draining at the footballs field; water is standing on the footballs field. Councilwoman Reed said, "I mean I've seen that but what...Mr. Andrews said he was told by the

engineer at Davis & Brown that it's caused by a drainage ditch on the railroad property that's behind the stadium. He said he told them that we own the property directly behind the stadium and if we wanted to we could clear it out up to the railroad property and clean out everything back there.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Milling said we've talked about what a good job Mr. Simon did in connection with the shoes and he would like to echo that he's been the beneficiary many times of the excellent work. Councilman Milling said he would like to point out for those who don't know Mr. & Mrs. Simon what a wonderful visit it is just to go in there. He said you almost wish that your shoes would wear out so that you can go and have a visit with them. He thanked them for the courtesies they've always shown.

Mayor Gloria Hines said they have always had manners. She said Mrs. Fannie Simon is always sitting on her stool welcoming everybody with a great smile. Mayor Hines said she's never gone in and there was any kind of frown, they always had a smile. She thanked them for the smiles and the faith they have in God.

Mayor Hines said she wanted to thank the City workers for all they do. She said with all this water everybody all over the City is having problems. She said the City is trying to do everything they can to help out that's why she is hoping we get the camera and the cutter for the vac truck because a lot of people are experiencing roots in the sewer lines and that is stopping the water flow.

Mayor Hines said we need to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel Police Department matter. Darlington City Council may or may not vote after closed executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman John Milling made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:15 PM to discuss a personnel Police Department issue which was seconded by Councilwoman Elaine Reed. The Darlington City Council may or may not vote after closed executive session.

REMINDERS

Monday January 21, 2019 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday- City Offices Closed;

Tuesday February 5, 2019 at 6:30 PM - Regular Monthly Meeting
Darlington City Council

5 Minute Break Before Executive Session

Upon motion of Councilman Bryant Gardner, seconded by Councilman John Milling, Executive Session ended at 7:42 PM.

Councilman John Milling made a motion that Chief Washington be involved in the reorganization of the Police & Fire Department and he be titled as the “Public Safety Director” and as such he would be responsible and in charge of all of the officers and volunteers with the City of Darlington Police Department and with those who are employed with and volunteers with the City of Darlington Fire Department effective immediately, Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. All approved the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Councilman Bryant Gardner, seconded by Councilwoman Carolyn Bruce, the meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk & Treasurer