

**CITY OF DARLINGTON  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING – 7:00 PM  
MARCH 1, 2016**

**PRESENT AT MEETING:**

Mayor Gloria Hines, City Manager, Mr. Howard Garland and Councilpersons: John Segars, Coleman Cannon, Carolyn Bruce, Bryant Gardner, and John Milling. Also present: Mrs. Lisa Rock, Police Chief Danny Watson, Fire Chief Pat Cavanaugh, Mr. Albert James, Mr. Lee Andrews, Mr. Freddie Kinsaul, Mr. Henry Chapman, Ms. Sheila Baccus, Mrs. Betty Jackson, Ms. Elaine Reed, Ms. Karen Carroll, Mrs. Rosena James, Mrs. Dyan Cohen, Ms. Rhonda Brown, Sheriff Wayne Byrd, Mr. Edward Arthur, Mr. Eddie Lott, Mr. Linwood Epps, Ms. Jannie Lathan, Mrs. Tonya Flowers, and her husband, Mr. Norman Stedman, Pastor Kendall Williams and a portion of his congregation, and a number of other guests. Former Councilman James Cooper came in late.

**NEWS REPORTERS**

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

**PRAYER**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Upon motion of Mr. Milling, seconded by Mr. Gardner, to approve the minutes of February 9, 2016 regular City Council Meeting. All approved the motion.**

**RESOLUTION FOR GIRL SCOUT TROOP #88**

Members of Girl Scout Troop #88 were present at the meeting and Mayor Hines read a resolution proclaiming March 6, 2016 – March 12, 2016 as Girl Scout Week. Mayor Hines urged everyone to join us in observing this week as Girl Scout Week in Darlington, SC. A picture was taken of the group along with Mayor Hines.

**DARLINGTON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ASSOCIATION –  
MRS. LISA ROCK**

Mrs. Rock said the first summer concert will be held in Liberty Lane on June 10, 2016 from 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM. The free event will feature a live band and food and drinks will be on sale. The DDRA will be part of expanding the Sweet Potato Festival by reviving the Yam Jam on Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at Palmetto Furniture on South Main Street. They are coordinating with the Pilot Club to increase the impact of the tourism dollars generated by the club’s festival. Mrs. Rock said the DDRA Annual Golf Tournament will be held Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at Darlington Country Club. She said the Annual “Taste of Darlington” will be held Thursday, April 21, 2016 at Darlington Raceway from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM. Tickets are \$30.00 in advance and \$35.00 at the gate. The DDRA is continuing its membership drive through the end of March. Mrs. Rock said new members will be entered into a drawing for a \$500.00 advertising credit and the winner will be announced at the “Taste of Darlington”. She said businesses that renew their DDRA membership for 2016 will be entered into a separate drawing for another \$500.00 advertising credit. Mrs. Rock said there will be a dedication ceremony for the Beautification Board’s Trees on the Square Project on March 9, 2016 at 10:00 AM on Cashua Street near the Carolina Bank Plaza. She said there are only six slots left for that project, which will go along S. Main Street. Mrs. Rock said they were awarded the Palmetto Pride Grant to continue the pots on Pearl Street. Mr. Milling said he and Mr. Wile at the Race Track talked about maybe coordinating a festival while the half-marathon is going on. Mrs. Rock said she will be happy to work with Mr. Wile at the Race Track.

**GREATER DARLINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE –MS.  
JANNIE LATHAN & MR. NORM STEDMAN**

Ms. Jannie Lathan introduced the new Chamber Executive Director, Mr. Norman Stedman. She said Mr. Stedman has his Associates Degree in Accounting and he also has a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in accounting. She said he last worked with the Hartsville Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Lathan said Mr. Stedman has been involved in a number of community organizations including his work as being on the Board of Directors for “Christmas in April”, as well as a member of Toastmasters and the Kiwanis. Mr. Stedman said he just started last week, but he attended the first ever Pee Dee Chamber Coalition meeting on February 24<sup>th</sup>. He said it’s all of the Chambers in the Pee Dee that come together to share best practices. He said he also attended the Clemson

Extension Advisory Board meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Stedman said Administrative Professionals Day will be held Wednesday, April 27, 2016 at the SIMT Building at Florence-Darlington Technical College. He said they will partner with the Florence Chamber of Commerce again this year. He said “Freedom Fest” will be July 4<sup>th</sup> at Darlington Raceway from 4:00 PM – 10:00 PM. Mr. Stedman said they are planning “Lunch & Learn sessions as well as Business after Hours at a number of the local businesses. He said he will be visiting a lot of the Chamber members in Darlington, Lamar and Society Hill to get his face out there and see what he can do for them.

### **PASTOR KENDALL WILLIAMS – SOUP KITCHEN**

Pastor Kendall Williams Pastors at First Church of God on N. Main Street here in Darlington. Pastor Williams said he was Pastor of a church in Myrtle Beach, SC for a while and while there he had quite a bit of experience in the homeless ministry and feeding homeless people. He said when he moved back to Darlington he noticed that we have a problem here in Darlington also. Pastor Williams said he began to minister to several of the people in the area that hang around Darlington Motel and Dollar General and have taken them to a homeless shelter that they know of that doesn't charge anything for them to stay. Pastor Williams said we do have a problem here in Darlington, we might not be able to see it, but it is there. He said he is here to propose to the City a “Soup Kitchen”. Pastor Williams said God has given him a vision to be able to feed some of the people (on a limited basis to start with). Pastor Williams said he has asked several churches to become committed to being involved in doing this and he presently has ten churches that have committed being involved in the “Soup Kitchen”. He said after visiting Florence and seeing what they are doing, their vision is to set up a food serving line on a Saturday morning to begin with, (on a Saturday morning from 7:00 AM-10:00 AM). He said there will be no cooking in the place that they are talking about trying to do this. Pastor Williams said all food will be prepared at home and brought to the designated site to be served. Pastor Williams also want to encourage people to bring toiletries, household goods (food, clothes, etc.) and offer them to the community on a first come first serve basis. He said he realize people are going to take advantage of us, but the main thing is that we do what God has called us to do. Pastor Williams asked for Council's blessing and approval to use a building that is owned by the City of Darlington. Pastor Williams asked council to allow them to use the vacant spot at the Street Department building on Saturday mornings for 2-3 hours. Pastor Williams said he knows feeding once a week is not enough, but we've got to crawl before we

can walk. He said they aren't asking for any money at this time, and doesn't foresee asking for money and feel like God will provide what it is they will need. Mayor Hines said this is an excellent idea. She asked council if any of them had a problem with Pastor Williams using the building for a "Soup Kitchen" and there was no opposition. Mr. Milling said it's a great idea, but he would like to ask that our City Attorney, Mr. Albert James check and see if there are any legal documents that other municipalities are using.

### **MRS. TONYA FLOWERS – FUNDING REQUEST**

Mrs. Flowers said she gave Council three pieces of information. Mrs. Flowers said she thank God for Pastor Williams because of them wanting to open a soup kitchen because it is much needed. She also thanked Pastor Williams because he and his church donated the money for them to get their own 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) because they did not have their own. Mrs. Flowers said they are in the process of relocating the transitional shelter from on the outskirts of town to an area closer in town so the women can get to where they need to go. They will be providing counseling, parenting skills, drug screens, etc. Mrs. Flowers said when they got the transitional home, they gave up the office they had at 126 Cashua Street. Mrs. Flowers thanked God for all those that were instrumental in keeping House of Refuge going. She said they have now relocated to 104 City Lane. She said they still provide counseling and partners with Serenity Counseling or Rubicon. They partner with Pee Dee Mental Health for those that need mental health services and for continuing education, they partner with Florence-Darlington Technical College and they have currently partnered with Darlington County School District. Mrs. Flowers said they have a tremendous amount of clothes that were donated to them so they will distribute them to the children in the Darlington County area that are in need of clothing based on the need. Mrs. Flowers said the expenses at the office where they are now are more than they had been paying before and asked Council to help them out by giving them a monetary donation to help them out with out-of-pocket expenses. Mayor Hines asked Mrs. Flowers if she had a copy of her 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) with her and Mrs. Flowers said Mr. Garland should have it. Mayor Hines told Mrs. Flowers that Council needs to see her 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) before we disburse any funds. Mr. Milling asked if we had funds available for something like this. Mr. Garland said we have the contingency account which has \$4,800 left for the rest of the budget year. Mayor Hines told Mrs. Flowers after they look at her 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) they will make the determination then and Mr. Garland will let her know.

### **DR. PEGGY COHEN – WILLIAMSON PARK**

Mrs. Cohen did a power point presentation and passed out information to Council. She said she is the President of the volunteer Williamson Park Committee and appeared before Council to propose that they add power to the event area. She said they can use power in the park for special events such as Earth Day, pumpkin carving, school field trips, etc. Mrs. Cohen said they had a goal to progress the park and make it more educational for the school children, but they need power in the park. She said they can't have a lot of little children in the park if they don't have restroom facilities. She said the City just purchased a portable restroom trailer facility, but it needs power. She said there needs to be a place in the park to put the trailer so they can have school field trips. Mrs. Cohen said the city purchased a projector and they can have movies in the park, concerts in the park and they have a yearly 5K run and they can do announcements in the park after the run. She said it makes it hard to do pumpkin carving if there's no electricity or a way to have a PA system. She said the proposal is to put a power pole at the edge of the right-of-way in the park and have an underground cable that goes down Azalea Loop. She said the property owner, Kyle James, is present at the meeting. Mrs. Cohen said they only have to remove one single tree. Duke Power has been out and surveyed the area for them. She said the tree in question is already dying. Mrs. Cohen said they will have a three foot ( 3') pedestal placed for the power. Mrs. Cohen said Duke Power will do the pole placement and run the underground cable free of charge. She said the tree is on the right-of-way and they have permission from Kyle James to have the tree removed since it sits on the edge of her property. She said the pedestal construction and placement cost will come out of funds raised from the Williamson Park Race. She said the monthly electric cost will be paid out of Park funds. She said the Park Committee is ready to put the pedestal in and it has to be put in before Duke Power can run underground cable. Mrs. Cohen said they need approval to have the tree removed so Duke Power can come out and run the lines for them. Mrs. Cohen said it's a city park and invited everyone to come and enjoy it. They are a 501 (c ) (3) under the City of Darlington. Mayor Hines asked about the cost estimate for the tree removal. Mr. Garland estimates the cost will be between \$900.00 and \$1,000. **Upon motion of Mr. Segars, seconded by Mr. Gardner, to approve removal of tree, which unanimously carried.**

### **FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2016-01 SCRLF SEWER BOND**

Mr. Garland said our Bond Attorney Ben Ziegler prepared the Series Ordinance which is an agreement between the City of Darlington and the

S.C. Revolving Loan Fund for a 1 1/2 % loan over 30 years for the By-Pass Sewer Grant. The loan is for \$521,000 and the City's match will be approximately \$281,000. Mr. Garland said bids came in last week and the low bid was \$805,000. Mr. Garland said rather than take funds from our Water & Sewer reserve fund, we will get this loan and spread the payments out over 30 years while interest rates are historically low. Mayor Hines asked how much the payments will be each month. Mr. Garland said they will have to calculate this because they haven't figured in what the attorneys fees will be for the bond. Mayor Hines asked if the bond could be paid off before the end of 30 years and Mr. Garland said, "Yes". **Upon motion of Mr. Cannon, seconded by Ms. Bruce, First Reading on Ordinance 2016-01 SCRLF Sewer Bond, which unanimously carried.**

**FIRST READING ON ORDINANCE 2016 -02 – MAYOR/COUNCIL FILING FEE CHANGE**

Mayor Hines said Mr. Hoyt Campbell came to our meeting and talked about the City increasing the filing fees for Mayor and Council positions. Mayor Hines said for a person to run for Council after approval of fee change, the fee will be \$140 and for the Mayor's position, the fee will be \$240.00.

**Councilman John Milling made a motion that council approves the increase in filing fees for Mayor and Council positions, which unanimously carried.**

**RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT APPLICATION – CHALMERS STREET DITCH**

Mr. Garland said thanks to the work of Lathan Consulting and Davis & Brown he has some firm estimates on the RIA Grant Application for the Chalmers Street area for storm water improvements. He said the total project cost estimate is \$531,190. The grant application request is \$444,870; we have a land acquisition easements that costs \$10,000; total engineering and construction management inspection cost is \$64,320; Admin cost is \$12,000 and total cost to be funded by the City is approximately 86,320.

Mayor Hines asked where the City's match would come from. Mr. Garland said we don't have our 2016-2017 budget calculations ready yet, but it would come from the water & sewer budget. Mayor Hines asked if any of the capital funds could be used. Mr. Garland said, "Yes", if Council approved it. Mr. Milling asked if this would be bid out some time in the future and Mr. Garland said, "Yes", but we have to receive grant approval before we bid it out. **Mr. Segars made a motion to proceed with the**

**grant application. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cannon. All approved the motion.**

**APRIL COUNCIL MEETING DATE CHANGE**

Mayor Hines said due to the special election on April 5, 2016, we will have our regular city council meeting on April 12, 2016.

**TEMPORARY SIGN ORDINANCE (PROPOSED CHANGES) – MRS. LISA ROCK**

Mrs. Rock did a power point presentation and also passed out information for the temporary signage proposed updates to Council. Mrs. Rock said after the Planning Commission was reconstituted in 2014, the first thing they did was tour the downtown business district. She said was one of major items they noticed were an inordinate number of temporary signs displayed. She said the issues of temporary signs continue to come up as a problem for the City and the commission wanted to research and investigate that matter. After polling the community, face book and social media for complaints and found temporary signage as a problem. Mrs. Rock said the proposed changes are meant to clarify some of the language and the addition of a permit fee is meant to give codes enforcement a tracking tool so it can remove or have businesses remove noncompliant signs in a timely manner. She said our statute states that “A” frame signs can be displayed only during operational hours and they can only be twelve square feet and taken up when the business is closed. Mrs. Rock said the proposed update would be to change the language in our ordinance to be more specific to read, “the sign must be placed near business entrance and allow for a minimum of 4 feet for pedestrian traffic and to specifically state that signs may be displayed during operational hours only”. Mrs. Rock said all of the changed were approved unanimously by the committee. Mr. Milling asked Mrs. Rock if she anticipates where the sign is to be located on the sidewalk, next to the building as opposed to the parking area. Mr. Segars asked how wide the sidewalks are on the Square. Mrs. Rock said it all depends on where you are, some are as wide as 8 or 10 feet. She said on Pearl Street the sidewalk is 6 or 8 feet and this is where there was issue with signage being on the sidewalk. Mrs. Rock said the committee also addressed inflatable signs. The current statute states that inflatable signs should be limited to one per lot, no colored or flashing lights, shall not exceed 6 feet in height, and shall be anchored in accordance with building code and shall not be converted to a permanent sign. The proposed update was to specify that inflatable signs must be placed near the building and at least 10 feet from the public street

and to spell out that inflatable signs are allowed on the roof structure. Mrs. Rock said the commission also discussed window signage. She said the current statute states you can cover 50% of your window area at your business. The commission felt that half of a window covered at a business was a bit much. Mayor Hines said this may seem to be too much for the commission, but it might not be for the business owner. Mayor Hines said we don't want to run the businesses out of town. Mr. Gardner said what Mrs. Rock was showing on the power point did not look bad to him. Mrs. Rock said these are proposed updates from the commission and council can pick and choose what they prefer. Mrs. Rock said the requirement for a permit fee for businesses would be a new addition which is the only way to track how long a business has had their sign up because our ordinance states that a sign can be up for 30 days. She said without a fee you have no proof to enforce the code. She said in researching this, she could not find anything in the minutes or in the ordinance, but it was already set up in the computer system for \$15.00. Mr. Garland said some of the biggest abusers of this are the tax prep places because they will turn each other in when they feel someone has had their sign up longer than they have. Mr. Gardner asked Mrs. Rock how they did the polling. She said some of the commission members talked with business owners and different community members that they spoke with. Mr. Cannon asked about the people that want to do yard sales. Mrs. Rock said the commission has investigated yard sales and will address this, but as a separate item. Ms. Bruce asked if these issues came about because of citizen complaints or business members complaining about each other. Mrs. Rock said from the commission standpoint, it was citizen complaints. Mr. Garland said he gets a lot of calls about the signs that are on the old Center Brick Warehouse building. Mayor Hines asked if we could handle this in a different way and rather than charging the people, try calling them if a sign stays up past the date. Mr. Garland said this comes down to record keeping. Ms. Bruce said there is a need for the proposed ordinance changes, but she thinks they need a little tweaking. Mr. Milling said language needs to be in the ordinance to make it easier for codes enforcement to know exactly what 30% of window coverage means. Mr. Garland said grocery stores paper their windows with signs. Mr. Gardner said at some point we've got to let businesses have their right with their business. He said want to keep them happy and cultivate business. Mrs. Rock said the main thing with the temporary signs is that we have no way to track the 30 day duration, so this is being abused. (Council will discuss this more at a later date)

## **CHRISTMAS DECORATION – MRS. LISA ROCK**

Mrs. Rock did a power point presentation of Christmas decorations. She said since she's been with the City the Street Department has complained about Christmas decorations for years and years. Mrs. Rock said decorations were large wreaths and cumbersome to put up and dangerous for one person to install and they were dated. Mrs. Rock said in 2014, the City allocated \$10,000 in hospitality funds to replace the decorations. She said the decorations were a lot more expensive than she realized and most are \$500.00 each, on sale therefore the \$10,000 didn't go very far. Mrs. Rock said to replace the large 5' wreaths would have been double the budget amount that council allotted, so they settled for 33 smaller wreaths with garland wrapping the decorative poles. Mrs. Rock said based on comments from citizens, they thought the decorations were insufficient. She said the Beautification Board agreed with the comments, but given budget restraints, thought this was a good start. She said the Board would like for Council to spend additional hospitality tax funds on Christmas decorations again this year and build on it for a few years. Mrs. Rock said the Beautification Board suggest that Council have a public hearing to get feedback on proposed decoration designs, but because of so much negative discussion, Mrs. Rock said she is not personally recommending that. Mrs. Rock said all the prices she will mention tonight will be good from mid-March to the end of March. Mrs. Rock said option 1 is to upgrade the new wreaths with additional lights to go around the 33 decorative poles as well as wreaths for 4 City buildings and funding to replace bulbs on the old silhouette angels and trees at an approximate cost of \$7,000-\$9,000. Option 2 will include everything in option 1 as well as replacing all of the silhouette lights just around the Square. Mr. Gardner asked if we still had the old decorations. Mrs. Rock said we do, but not all of them are functioning. She said they would have to change all of the bulbs and see which ones are working. Councilman Gardner said he has a group that met and the suggestion was to see if they can get a committee of volunteers together and see what they can do to salvage what we have, which would save us some money. Mayor Hines told Councilman Gardner if he has a group that can do this, maybe before the deadline, give them a string of lights and see what they can do with them. Councilman Gardner asked how the lights plug into the poles and Mrs. Rock said there are outlets on the poles. She said outlets are on the poles around the Square, but with their idea of extending the decorations down S. Main Street, they have to consider that there are currently no outlets and Duke Energy's engineers have not gotten back with her about the cost to put outlets on the poles. Mayor Hines asked Mrs. Rock about her decision

on adding an extra plug if we were to add more lights around the poles. Mrs. Rock said that would be a good idea and not terribly expensive to do. Option 3 is extending the decorations on 30 poles along S. Main Street at an approximate cost of \$24,000-\$45,000. Mrs. Rock recommends option 2 completely replacing the pole decorations on the Square this year as well as adding lights to the garland and adding wreaths to the City buildings at estimated cost of approximately \$30,000. Mrs. Rock said we don't know about S. Main Street yet, but if Duke Energy comes back to her and say they can put the outlets in for us, we would have enough decorations to do that. Mrs. Rock said the display they were looking at for S. Main Street has "Season's Greetings" with poinsettias on the side, but the issue would be if we can get power to that location. Mayor Hines said it's beautiful and everyone would be pleased with it if we could get Duke Energy to help us out with that. Mrs. Rock said the Beautification Board would like for Council to invest a certain amount annually so that we can stage these decorations. Mayor Hines suggested that the City designate approximately \$40,000 of hospitality tax funds to buy new decorations. Councilman Segars wanted to know what the recommendation of the Beautification Board. Mrs. Rock said they just wanted more lights added. Mrs. Karen Carroll said the old wreaths that they had were so big, so that's why they downsized to the smaller ones they have now. She said they still have the 4 large wreaths and they can reuse them. Councilman Gardner said he and his group will take a look at the wreaths and see if they can spruce them up for reuse. **Upon motion of Mr. Cannon, seconded by Councilwoman Bruce, to designate \$40,000 to purchase new Christmas decorations, which unanimously carried.**

### **REMINDERS**

Friday, March 25, 2016 – All City offices closed in observance of Easter (Good Friday);

Tuesday, April 5, 2016 – City Council Election, Ward 2

Tuesday, April 12, 2016 Regular City Council Meeting at 7:00 PM

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion of Councilman Segars, seconded by Councilwoman Bruce, the meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.

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Mayor

ATTEST:

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Clerk & Treasurer