

**CITY OF DARLINGTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

November 13, 2018

The Regular Meeting of Darlington City Council was held November 13, 2018 at 6:30 P.M. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall at 400 Pearl Street.

Present at the meeting: Mayor Gloria C. Hines, Councilpersons John Segars, Shelia Baccus, Carolyn Bruce, John Milling, Bryant Gardner and Elaine Reed. Also present was City Manager, Howard Garland, City Attorney Kevin Etheridge, Chief of Police, Kelvin Washington, Fire Chief Pat Cavanaugh, Mr. Freddie Kinsaul, Mr. Alex Gainey and a room full of citizens.

Copies of the agenda were faxed to The News & Press, The Morning News and the Hartsville Messenger with place, date and time of meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Hines.

PRAYER

Mr. Gardner gave the invocation which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Reed made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2018 council meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bruce. All approved the motion.

Ms. Reed made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2018 regular council meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bruce. All approved the motion.

DDRA UPDATE – MS. LISA ROCK

Ms. Lisa Rock stated that the DDRA will present is final grant award for 2018 of \$1,000 to Palmetto Office furniture for façade improvements. To date the DDRA had awarded \$7,000 to local businesses for improvements, and the projects connected with those grants have been improvements

totaling more than \$170,000. Ms. Rock also stated the DDRA had approved another 5,000 for 2019. This incentive program would be a 50/50 match for business owners. It is the goal of the DDRA to see businesses grow and the program is doing just that. The DDRA will host a series of events for the holidays, Shop Small November 2, 5pm – 8pm at your local businesses. They will have 200 tote bags filled with local business information and coupons to give out for this event. Market on the Square will host the Christmas Market December 15, 10am-2pm, at fellowship hall at Trinity United Methodist church located on Pearl Street. The DDRA will also be doing the Shop Darlington promotion where you shop at any Darlington business and with 5 receipts and an entry form you will be put in a drawing to win one of three \$100 fuel cards.

CHAMBER UPDATE – MS. HARRIET

Ms. Harriett Hobbs stated the board had voted to have the Toast of Darlington moved from Oak Street to the public square due to circumstances beyond the chambers control. The feedback from having it downtown was great. Bethea Retirement home had brought a load of guests. The chamber held their annual planning meeting with these dates set, the Annual Chamber Banquet, February 28, 2019, the Spring Fling, Easter egg hunt, April 13, Bow Ties and Pearls, April 26, Freedom Fest, June 29 and the Toast of Darlington October 10. Ms. Hobbs stated that they will be doing an event this year called Light up Darlington. She hopes that downtown will look like a scene from a Hallmark movie on December 2. She said that someone had donated a 21-foot artificial Christmas tree and they plan to have that sitting on a platform painted by the Kiwanis club that will sit on the drained water fountain at the courthouse. This tree will be lite up on December 2. They will also have the Bradford trees lite up around the square and you can pay \$100 to have one lite up in someone’s honor or something they are thankful for. Also, on December 2 they will serve hot chocolate and cookies. Mayor Hines thanked Ms. Hobbs and her committee for bringing her vision to life.

CITIZENS WISHING TO APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL

Ms. Andrea Knapp appeared before council and passed out a letter she read. The letter reads.

Council. I've lived in Darlington for 10 years and I love living here. I own businesses in this town. My kids and grandchildren live within a two-minute drive of my house. It's a place where I look forward to seeing these grandchildren grow up. I've seen and heard many things that surprise me but none so much as what has been happening the past few months. I admit I don't come to every council meeting because of my work schedule. Thankfully, Anna Dewitt records each meeting and I catch up when I get home. She does a great job at this and should be commended. As council members, you are all seated there because members of your communities voted you in. Each one of you. We trusted that you would do what you think is best for our city. Whether you all agree with each other or your citizens or not, you are there for the betterment of the community at large. We did not however, vote you in to see certain members act like children every month. We did not vote you in so that we could watch you bicker, make snide remarks and be just outrageously cruel to each other with back stabbing and small gang mentality every month. And trust me when I say that as a citizen, on this side of the bench you are sitting on? That's what each member of your communities are seeing. Time and time again. I'm also not the only person who has said this to you. In October there was a paid ad in the News and Press by Donald Gillard – a nonresident of the city. Mr. Gillard was upset that Councilwoman Bruce had voted for a 'white owned company' instead of a black owned company. He went on to pick fault at ONLY Councilwoman Bruce many times even though other members of council voted the same way. He mentioned race 15 times. As I mentioned earlier, you are all voted in by your community members to make the best choice there is. I believe that Councilwoman Bruce voted the way she thought would best help this town. I applaud her for that. Is Mr. Gillard saying that Councilwoman Bruce should have voted for the 'black female owned' company simply because SHE'S black and that Councilwoman Bruce should now be considered a 'sellout'? The overall takeaway from the ad was that because Lathan Consulting Corporation was owned by a black woman this should have been the only information needed to give her that vote. How are we, in 2018-TWENTY EIGHTEEN – even thinking that is acceptable? I personally don't care what color a person is, whether they are gay or straight, religious or not. If you are nice to me, I'm nice to you and you will

get treated the same way equally. As is the same for businesses. If you can do the job, are good for the town overall then whatever color you are should not even enter the equation. I won't even go into the accusations of bribery that he placed against councilwoman Bruce. How do you as a Mayor, how do you as fellow council members allow such derogatory, inflammatory and untrue statements be said against one of your fellow council members. How do you not publicly stand up for each other? How are you doing what's best for the community by allowing this rhetoric? By your lack of public statements denouncing his ad, you are showing business owners of this city – black AND white that they ARE viewed separately, that they are technically segregated. Again, this is 2018!!!! I know that these are Mr. Gillard's words, that this is his disgusting racial rhetoric, however, Councilwoman Baccus, and Mayor, I believe Mr. Gillard has worked with you in the past, representing you and campaigning for you, thus in my eyes and I would assume most of YOUR communities, he is linked with you. How are you not denouncing the things he is saying about a fellow council member. You don't distance yourselves from this man or his words. Instead, you further this racial garbage by sharing his posts on Facebook, like children. Your community sees it all. Do you agree with what he says? If so, you should be removed from your position. Mayor, back in 2017 you stated 'I thank all the voters, I'll help you, no matter where you live or what color you are, that is just the kind of person I am' And yet here you sit, sharing posts, allowing this man to make prejudicial statements against a fellow council woman and local businesses.

Mayor Hines stated that statement is false, and Ms. Knapp said it came from a direct quote from the New and Press. Mayor Hines says she can't help what the News and Press says.

Ms. Knapp continues with her letter.

Chevron Scott commented in this week's News and Press that the city has descended into the 'murky swamp' of divisive rhetoric filled with prejudice and racism. Your communities are reading this. Now November 2nd, Councilwoman Baccus, you posted on Facebook-not a city website-that you were hosting a community meeting; saying it was all for the citizens in Ward 1 and "all is welcomed". I live in Ward 1. YOU represent ME. As I said I can't get to most meetings that happen because of work. Anna Dewitt – a community member went to record the meeting and was kicked out. You said ALL were welcome. Why did you kick her out? As a resident of Ward 1

I was interested in what was being said. Unfortunately, because there were no official minutes taken, no recording, I have no clue what happened, what was discussed and how I could help this little town as you stated. Did you post a follow up on a public page for all your Ward to see what was discussed? Did you post anything on the City website? I for one didn't see one. So, if only the people who WENT to the meeting know what happened, tell me HOW the rest of the community is supposed to help and make this town better? How are you serving the community as a whole? I've said before, that for every positive thing that happens in Darlington, the Sweet Potato Festival, the Christmas lights, the Taste of Christmas, for everything that the Greater Chamber does, ALL of this gets overlooked and forgotten about when horrendous behavior like this, that we are seeing is accepted. All you've done is promote racial disharmony in this community. In this Pearl of the Pee Dee. Finally, all this saddens me so much but what brings tears to my eyes is that I am watching my grandchildren grow up and then seeing all this happening. They are growing up in a world where they are seeing this behavior from you. Adults. In 2018. The Community sees this and anyone, anywhere in the world with a computer can see this. You should be so ashamed of yourselves. So incredibly ashamed. What a legacy What a shame.

Mayor Hines thanks Ms. Knapp and moved on to the next to appear before council.

Ms. Gladys Jules appeared before council to discuss a Ward #1 community meeting held by Ms. Baccus. Ms. Jules opens with wanting to know who the young lady is recording the council meeting is. She was under the impression that she was associated with city council but now she is figuring out that she is not. Ms. Jules said that she had been coming to this meeting for a year now and everyone has been extremely difficult for her to sit through. She stated that the city services are terrible, and that Mayor and council are totally disrespected. She says its black and white, always has been and probably will always be, but what we need is order. She wanted to know if it was order for the City attorney to assist someone in making a presentation with help with legal terms. She needs to know how that is right, is he available to help the rest of them, is there nothing in the regulations preventing him to do so? She feels that the young lady that records our city meeting (Ms. Anna Dewitt) that by her actions at the Ward 1 community meeting held by Ms. Baccus, she feels entitled to these photographs and to make comments on them about council members and not have any

repercussions. She said what was wrong with Ms. Baccus not allowing Ms. Dewitt to come into the community meeting and record? She said she totally agreed with her decision because she lives in a community on H Avenue and most of them don't participate with things like that because of fear. She said that allowing her to come is saying don't say anything because your being recorded, and everyone should have a right to talk. Ms. Jules said she commends Shelia Baccus for having the community meeting and having their neighborhood cleaned up. She asks the city administrator, city council and the city attorney provide the citizens a training session on the operation of the ordinances for proper behavior during city council meetings. She feels we need active assistance during the meetings from our law enforcement because the meetings are that bad.

Ms. Rhonda Brown appeared before council concerning the drainage issues in the Oakdale and Country club community. She wanted to know if council had the time to discuss the issue or should she come back next month. Mayor Hines said she had spoken with Howard about the issue and she said there was some things she would like to do on Jessamine street and Chestnut street and that they need a camera and cutter because the lines are believed to be filled with roots preventing drainage. She believes this is the same thing that's happening in the Oakdale area and they need to have a workshop on that to see where they are going with that. Ms. Brown just wanted to make sure they were on the schedule to address the problems.

SECOND READING OF 110 NEZ PERCE STREET

Second Reading of Ordinance 2018-17, the annexation of 110 Nez Perce Drive. Motion by Mr. Milling to approve, seconded by Mr. Segars. All approved the motion.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Sergeant Terrance Carroway Street Naming

Motion by Ms. Reed to submit application to the planning commission for approval of renaming Southern Pine Street to Sgt. T. Carroway Street. Seconded by Ms. Bruce, all in favor.

b. Sergeant Terrance Carroway Street, Playground Naming

Motion by Ms. Bruce to change the name the playground on Southern Pine Street to Terrance Carroway Playground. Seconded by Mr. Gardner, all in favor. Mr. Milling stated that it would be a good idea to have some sort of memorial marker put up as well to give people a reason why the park is named after Sgt. Carroway. The Mayor agreed and it's something that they do not have to vote on but just see that it is done.

c. Special Recognition in Honor of Sergeant Terrance Carroway

Mayor Hines stated that she had known Terrance Carroway all 52 years of his life. She said Terrance Carroway was a hero. He had courage, bravery and was a true leader never seeking recognition for anything he ever did. He was a genuine good person putting others first never asking for anything in return. Mayor Hines presented a key to the City of Darlington to Terrance Carroway, Jr as a reminder of what a wonderful man and mentor his daddy was to everyone. Ms. Carroway thanked the City for all they had done for her husband and their family. Ms. Carroway stated that with Terrance's death it was a needless sacrifice of one but has been and will be the catalyst of a movement, not just a moment. The legacy of Terrance Carroway will live on.

d. House of Refuge Funding Request – Tonya Flowers

Ms. Tonya Flowers with the House of Refuge appeared before council to request a donation of a \$1,000. \$500 will go toward the rental space in the RV/Boat Storage facility in Darlington for 6 months and the other \$500 will go toward operational expenses. This space is to house a tractor trailer donation worth \$30,000-\$50,000 worth of merchandise. After discussion of available city funds for this request. Motion by Ms. Reed to give the House of Refuge \$500. Seconded by Ms. Baccus. All in favor. City Attorney Kevin Etheridge said that he would give her the other \$500 that she was seeking.

e. First Reading Ordinance 2018-18 Zoning of 110 Nez Perce Drive

Motion by Mr. Milling to rezone 110 Nez Perce Street to a R-10 low density. Seconded by Ms. Reed. All in favor.

f. Playground, Outdoor Basketball Court Bids

Mr. Lee Andrews was present to discuss bids for the playground and outdoor basketball court bids. After a brief discussion, Motioned by Mr. Milling to approve bids with Bliss Products without the fitness equipment, he amends his motion because the bid doesn't not include the outdoor basketball courts. Motion by Mr. Milling to accept bid from Bliss Products for the playground equipment for \$245,786.31. Seconded by Mr. Gardner. All in favor.

Motion by Mr., Gardner to approve the bids from Industrial Paving and BN Sports for the outdoor basketball courts in the total amount of \$25,000. Seconded by Ms. Reed. All in favor.

g. MASC Setoff Debt Agreement

Motion by Mr. Milling to approve the MASC setoff debt agreement. Seconded by Ms. Bruce. All in favor.

Ms. Baccus made a comment about the letter Ms. Knapp had previous read in the meeting. She stated that the citizens of Ward 1 did not want to be on YouTube and they did not want to be on Facebook. She said they have a right to their privacy and the meeting was simply to discuss any issues they may have, ask any questions and gather any information to be more informed about what was going on in the city. She said most of those citizens are senior citizens and had asked not to be recorded and by law they have that right. She said for the meeting to be recorded in a private setting, the recorder would need a written consent from everyone in that room that they wanted to be recorded.

Ms. Garland informed council and Mayor of something that is very special this week. St. Johns Elementary School is celebrating 200 years as an

educational institution. They are the oldest continuous operating school in the state of SC and they are located within our city limits.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: COTTON SEED OIL MILL SITE

Mr. Milling made a motion to go into Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Baccus. All in favor.

Mr. Milling made a motion to come out of Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bruce. All in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Mr. Gardner, seconded by Ms. Bruce, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk & Treasurer