

REGULAR MEETING  
DARLINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL  
DARLINGTON, SC

May 1, 2023

A Regular Meeting of the County Council of Darlington County was held this 1<sup>st</sup> day of May 2023, at 6 p.m., at the Courthouse Annex/EMS Building, 1625 Harry Byrd Highway (Highway 151), Darlington, South Carolina.

NOTICE OF MEETING

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda providing the date, time, and place of the meeting was emailed to the local newspapers, persons requesting notification, and posted on the county's website and on the bulletin board in the lobby of the courthouse.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Bobby Hudson, Vice-Chairman Marvin Le Flowers, Chaplain Dannie Douglas, Jr., Mr. David Coker, Mr. Albert Davis, III, Mrs. Angie Stone Godbold, and Ms. Joyce W. Thomas.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. M. Kirk Askins.

ALSO PRESENT

County Administrator Marion Charles Stewart, II, County Attorney James H. Lucas, Clerk to Council J. JaNet Bishop, Central Communications Director Michelle Hall, Emergency Management Director Molly Odom, Finance Director Sherman Dibble, Fire District Chief Ricky Flowers, Human Resources Director Ginger Winburn, Library Director Jimmie Epling, Sheriff James Hudson, and others.

REPORTERS PRESENT

None present.

Call to Order / Invocation / Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Hudson called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Mr. Douglas presented the invocation and Mr. Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Citizens' Comments

There were no citizens' comments.

Personal Appearances - Mrs. Debra Jackson - Introduction Of Collaboration2gether, Inc.

Mrs. Debra Jackson talked about her organization, Collaboration2gether, a non-profit organization established in 2009 to serve the community with an emphasis on saving our

youth, providing case management services, consulting/advocacy, aging matters podcast, faith base services, and ministerial alliance. The organization promises to engage, embrace, encourage, and empower every individual who requests services and who they advocate for, converse with, and seek to liberate. Collaboration2gether also provides summer camps for children and is working towards providing after-school services in the Darlington area. Mrs. Davis requested in-kind space in the Darlington area. She also talked about an upcoming event, Sweeping Thru The Streets, scheduled for June 24<sup>th</sup> at Byerly Park in Hartsville for which she was requesting partnerships, volunteers, vendors, sponsorships, and support from other organizations. Darlington County School District Superintendent will speak at the event to promote family engagement. This event will also include health clinics, financial literacy, mental health people who will talk about addictions, and social services volunteers who will talk about generational curses/things that need to be broken, etc. Mrs. Davis emphasized that Collaboration2gether is about working together and building relationships and partnerships with our communities, and services to families. No one is turned away. She mentioned that the organization has to meet a mandate by June 2023 and needs to be in a facility to provide mentorship for children.

#### Consent Agenda

Included in the Consent Agenda were the following:

- 5.A. Animal Shelter Quarterly Report, January - March 2023
- 5.B. Report Of Vacancies & Term Expirations (As Of June 30, 2023) On Council Appointed Boards/Commissions/Committees
- 5.C. Darlington County Parks, Recreation and Tourism Monthly Report, May 2023
- 5.D. Financial Statement thru March 2023

**MOTION** made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Davis to receive the Consent Agenda items as information.

The motion carried unanimously.

#### Approval Of Minutes – Minutes Of Public Hearing And Regular Meeting, April 3, 2023

**MOTION** made by Mr. Coker and seconded by Mr. Douglas to approve the minutes of the public hearing and regular meeting held on April 3, 2023.

The motion carried unanimously.

#### Ordinances

Ordinance No. 23-02, An Ordinance To Amend The Existing Agreement Governing The Darlington-Florence Industrial Park By And Between Darlington County, South Carolina And Florence County, South Carolina To Enlarge The Boundaries Of The Industrial Park To Include Certain Property Now Or To Be Hereafter Owned And/Or Operated By Hawfinch Solar, LLC; And Authorizing Other Related Matters - THIRD READING

**MOTION** made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Davis to approve third reading of Ordinance No. 23-02.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ordinance No. 23-03, An Ordinance To Make Appropriations For Ordinary County Purposes For Darlington County For The Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2023, And Ending June 30, 2024; To Provide For The Expenditures Thereof; And To Provide For Revenues For The Payment Thereof - FIRST READING

The title of Ordinance No. 23-03 was read for first reading. No action required.

Ordinance No. 23-04, An Ordinance To Designate That Agency In The County For Alcohol And Drug Abuse Planning For Programs And To Make Appropriations Pursuant To Sections 6-27-40(B) And 12-33-245(B) And (C) Of The 1976 Code Of Laws Of South Carolina, As Amended, For Darlington County For The Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2023, And Ending June 30, 2024 - FIRST READING

The title of Ordinance No. 23-04 was read for first reading. No action required.

Resolutions

Resolution No. 754, Proclamation For Emergency Medical Services Week, May 21-27, 2023

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Douglas to approve Resolution No. 754 proclaiming May 21-27, 2023, as Emergency Medical Services Week.

The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Flowers read the resolution for the record.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

Other Items

FY22/23 Accommodations Tax Funding Recommendations & Budget Of Planned Expenditures For 30% Special Funds

**MOTION** made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Flowers to approve the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee's FY23/24 funding recommendations as presented (attached).

The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Thomas asked about the budget of planned expenditures for the 30% Special Funds. Mr. Stewart explained that the 30% Special Funds must be used for very specific purposes and goes to organizations that have ongoing advertising to attract people to the area such as the Chambers of Commerce. These funds are not eligible for general festivals or events.

Administrative Update - Sheriff James Hudson

Sheriff James Hudson presented his April monthly report for the Sheriff's Office. He presented the number of calls answered, reports written, arrests, warrants served, traffic stops, mental health transports, funeral escorts, domestic calls, burglaries, break-ins, stolen vehicles, larcenies, homicides, assaults, suspicious persons, harassments/stalking calls,

missing persons, abductions, fraud calls, mental health calls, assistance to motorists and EMS, civil papers served, warrants, citations, etc.

Ms. Thomas asked whether the Sheriff's Office is equipped to transport mental health patients. Sheriff Hudson briefly talked about the Sheriff's Office responsibility and procedure for transporting mental health patients.

Mr. Flowers asked whether the jail population and court schedule had gotten back on schedule since the COVID pandemic. Sheriff Hudson confirmed that things were getting better. As of last week, the jail count was 139 compared to 200, and they were working with the Solicitor's Office to get individuals released or sentenced.

Mr. Davis asked whether people were being transported to court or the hearings were being held via live stream. Sheriff Hudson responded that the judges are requiring individuals to appear in court.

Ms. Thomas asked whether people could be put out in the streets when they are served with civil papers. Sheriff Hudson responded that the documents signed by the magistrate include a narrative containing a time frame when people must be off the property.

#### Administrative Update – County Administrator Charles Stewart

Budget Worksession. Mr. Stewart reminded Council of the Budget Worksession scheduled for Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:30 a.m. at Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments. During the budget worksession, Council will receive the Wage/Salary Report and proposed implementation and the Administrator's proposed budget.

Courthouse Construction Update. Mr. Stewart stated that he had an update to present at the last Council meeting regarding construction milestones that were occurring. However, he was unable to attend that meeting. There will be another meeting tomorrow morning, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, for another update. He reported that in monitoring the new courthouse construction and the Historical Commission Museum addition, it appears that both facilities will be ready to open to the public in November if there are no delays.

#### Requests / Comments – Members Of Council

Mr. Davis thanked everyone for attending the meeting and asked everyone to be safe.

Mr. Douglas also thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Ms. Thomas asked whether the County Administrator would let Council know something about the Revitalization Grant with Pee Dee Council of Government and whether it had been postponed. Mr. Stewart mentioned that Pee Dee Regional Council of Government had a series of events to happen, but he did not think that the grant had been postponed.

Ms. Thomas reported that she appeared before Florence County Council on Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, as a member of the Transportation Committee (FLATS). She was concerned that

their report did not include information regarding the number of accidents on Highway 52 Business and 52 Bypass in Darlington. Ms. Thomas asked whether the County Administrator had such information. Mr. Stewart responded that the staff could obtain this information. However, no one had asked the staff for such statistics.

Mrs. Godbold requested an update on the status of Cashua Ferry Road bridge construction. Mr. Stewart will contact SCDOT (South Carolina Department of Transportation) regarding the status of the bridge work.

Mrs. Godbold also asked about the status of the work on Cashua Ferry Landing. Mr. Stewart responded that they were still waiting for SCDNR (South Carolina Department of Natural Resources) to get back to the county regarding additional funds since the price to complete the project came in higher. An extension was signed with SCDNR while they search for additional funds to complete this project.

Mrs. Godbold asked about the number of ambulances the county currently runs. Mr. Stewart responded four to six depending upon the staff. However, the plan is to have six ambulances during the day and five at night, which depends upon the amount of staff. The county is currently down by at least nine positions.

Mrs. Godbold asked whether the county had thought about a contract service provider for EMS. Mr. Stewart responded that the county could try this, but it has not proven successful in several other counties. With a full contract, the county would have no control over the ambulance service, will not save money, and may not have full staffing every day. He explained that if Council wants to fix the staffing problem, Council will have to add ambulances which could be discussed during the budget worksession. Mr. Stewart talked about the call volume for ambulances in Darlington County being higher than surrounding counties. This would require adding additional staff.

Mrs. Godbold questioned how the county would staff additional positions when the county cannot staff current positions. Mr. Stewart stated that part of the problem is that everyone in the surrounding area knows about Darlington County's call volume compared to other places. This was something the staff was working on.

Vote For Executive Session (1) Discussion Of Negotiations Incident To Proposed Contractual Arrangements And Proposed Sale Or Purchase Of Property RE: The I-20 Industrial Park; (2) Discussion Of Personnel Matters Involving The County Recreation And Administration Departments; and (3) The Receipt Of Legal Advice Where The Legal Advice Relates To A Pending, Threatened, Or Potential Claim Or Other Matters Covered By The Attorney-Client Privilege, Settlement Of Legal Claim, Or The Position Of The Public Agency In Other Adversary Situations Involving The Assertion Against The Agency Of A Claim Regarding The County Recreation Department

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Coker to vote for executive session for (1) discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property RE: the I-20 Industrial Park; (2) discussion of personnel matters involving the county Recreation and Administration Departments; and (3) the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claim, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim regarding the county Recreation Department.

The motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Coker for Council, the County Administrator, the County Attorney, and two members of the County Attorney's law firm to go into executive session after a five-minute recess for the (1) discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property RE: the I-20 Industrial Park; (2) discussion of personnel matters involving the county Recreation and Administration Departments; and (3) the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claim, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim regarding the county Recreation Department.

The motion carried unanimously.

Council recessed at 6:33 p.m. prior to going into executive session and reconvened at 7:12 p.m. Upon reconvening, Chairman Hudson announced that no action was taken in executive session.

Adjournment

**MOTION** made by Chairman Hudson to adjourn the meeting. There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



J. Janet Bishop  
Clerk to Council



Bobby Hudson, Chairman  
Darlington County Council

Approved at meeting of June 5, 2023.



**ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
FY 23/24 RECOMMENDATIONS  
MARCH 2023**

<b>APPLICANTS / EVENTS</b>	<b>REQUESTS</b>	<b>AVAILABLE FUNDS</b>	<b>COMMITTEE RECOMMEND</b>	<b>COUNTY COUNCIL APPROVAL 05/01/2023</b>
<b>30% Special Fund (\$38,655)</b>				
1 Hartsville Chamber of Commerce	\$ 38,655		\$ 25,770.00	\$ 25,770.00
2 Darlington Chamber of Commerce	\$ 19,328		\$ 12,885.00	\$ 12,885.00
<b>Total Special Funds</b>	<b>\$ 57,983</b>	<b>\$ 38,655</b>	<b>\$ 38,655.00</b>	<b>\$ 38,655.00</b>

<b>65% Remaining Funds (\$65,000)</b>				
<b>Darlington Area - 37%</b>				
1 American Legion Post 13/Darlington Veterans Memorial	\$ 1,500		\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00
2 Darlington Chamber of Commerce/Freedom Fest	\$ 6,000		\$ 2,125.00	\$ 2,125.00
3 Darlington Downtown Revitalization Assn.	\$ 12,590		\$ 5,862.50	\$ 5,862.50
4 Grand Old Post Office Foundation	\$ 15,000		\$ 6,662.50	\$ 6,662.50
5 Southeastern Bluegrass Asso. Of SC	\$ 20,000		\$ 8,650.00	\$ 8,650.00
<b>Total for Darlington Area</b>	<b>\$ 55,090</b>	<b>\$ 24,050</b>	<b>\$ 24,050.00</b>	<b>\$ 24,050.00</b>

<b>Hartsville Area - 37%</b>				
1 Butler Heritage Foundation	\$ 10,000		\$ 5,262.50	\$ 5,262.50
2 EdVenture Hartsville	\$ 8,279		\$ 2,625.00	\$ 2,625.00
3 Hartsville Community Center Building Comm/Center Theater	\$ 25,000		\$ 11,662.50	\$ 11,662.50
4 SC Jr. Golf Foundation/Players Championship	\$ 8,000		\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00
<b>Total for Hartsville Area</b>	<b>\$ 51,279</b>	<b>\$ 24,050</b>	<b>\$ 24,050.00</b>	<b>\$ 24,050.00</b>

<b>Lamar Area - 13%</b>				
1 Christmas on Main/Lamar	\$ 3,500		\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00
2 Lamar Egg Scramble Jamboree	\$ 4,500		\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00
<b>Total for Lamar Area</b>	<b>\$ 8,000</b>	<b>\$ 8,450</b>	<b>\$ 8,000.00 *</b>	<b>\$ 8,000.00</b>

<b>Society Hill Area - 13%</b>				
1 New Vision Community Dev. Corp./Rice Festival	\$ 15,000		\$ 6,450.00	\$ 6,450.00
2 Society Hill Catfish Festival	\$ 3,000		\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
<b>Total for Society Hill Area</b>	<b>\$ 18,000</b>	<b>\$ 8,450</b>	<b>\$ 8,450.00</b>	<b>\$ 8,450.00</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 264,738</b>	<b>\$ 65,000</b>	<b>\$ 64,550.00</b>	<b>\$ 64,550.00</b>

<b>* Committee Recommendation to Carry Over \$450 for Lamar area &gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;</b>			<b>\$ 450.00 *</b>	<b>\$ 450.00</b>
Total 65% Remaining Funds			<b>\$ 65,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 65,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL 30% Special Funds Plus 65% Remaining Funds</b>		<b>\$103,655</b>	<b>\$ 103,205</b>	<b>\$ 103,205.00</b>