

REGULAR MEETING
DARLINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL
DARLINGTON, SC

January 5, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the County Council of Darlington County was held this 5th day of January 2021, 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, on the bulletin board in the lobby of the courthouse, and at the entrance of the Courthouse Annex/EMS Building.

The following notice was distributed with the agenda and posted on the county website:

"The Darlington County Council Meeting Room Is Restricted To Darlington County Council Members And Required Staff Only Until Further Notice - Due to the COVID-19 threat, public and media access will be accomplished by live video stream. Darlington County Council meetings will be live-streamed on Darlington County Council Live Meetings Facebook page and archived on Darlington County website at www.darcosc.com. To access the live stream, go to the County website at www.darcosc.com, scroll to the middle of the page to Feature, and click on the live stream link. To access the archived videos of Council meetings, go to the County website at www.darcosc.com, from the Government tab, click on County Council, then scroll to the Council Meeting Video tab on the left of the page.

Citizens' comments are accepted in writing via email to the Clerk to Council at jbishop@darcosc.net or via mail to the County Administrator's Office, 1 Public Square, Room 210, Darlington, SC 29532. Written comments must be received by noon on Monday, ~~July 20, 2020~~ ^{January 5, 2021}. Citizens' comments will also be accepted at the meeting via telephone at 843-398-4469 beginning at 5:50 p.m. to be placed on the Citizens' Comments roster. Citizens' comments will be heard during the Citizens' Comments segment of the agenda and will be governed by Section 2-85 of Darlington County Code of Ordinances."

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Bobby Hudson, Vice Chairman J. Lewis Brown, Chaplain Dannie Douglas, Jr., Mr. David Coker, Mrs. Angie Stone Godbold, and Ms. Joyce W. Thomas.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Albert Davis, III and Mr. Marvin Le Flowers.

ALSO PRESENT

County Administrator Marion Charles Stewart, III, Acting County Attorney Jacob Godwin, Clerk to Council J. JaNet Bishop, and Emergency Management Coordinator Molly Odom.

REPORTERS PRESENT

Due to COVID-19 threat, public and media access to Darlington County Council meeting was via live video stream on Darlington County Council Live Meetings Facebook page.

SWEARING IN CEREMONY

At 6 p.m., the Honorable Marvin I. Lawson, Judge of Probate, administered the Oath of Office to Mrs. Angie Stone Godbold (Council District 1), Ms. Joyce Thomas (Council District 3), and Mr. J. Lewis Brown (Council District 7). Judge Lawson administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Marvin Le Flowers (Council District 5) prior to the Council meeting. These Council members' term of office will expire December 31, 2024.

REGULAR MEETING

Call To Order /Election Of Officers

Acting County Attorney Jacob Godwin called the meeting to order and opened the floor for nominations for Chaplain.

MOTION was made by Mr. Coker and seconded by Ms. Thomas to keep all officers from 2020. By acclamation, all the officers will remain the same for 2021.

The motion carried unanimously.

For the year 2021, Mr. Bobby Hudson will serve as Chairman, Mr. J. Lewis Brown will serve as Vice Chairman, and Mr. Dannie Douglas, Jr. will serve as Chaplain.

Attorney Godwin relinquished the gavel to Chairman Hudson.

Invocation / Pledge Of Allegiance

Mr. Douglas presented the invocation and Mr. Coker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Citizens' Comments

Due to COVID-19, citizens' comments were accepted in writing via email to the Clerk to Council at jbishop@darcosc.net or via mail to the County Administrator's Office, 1 Public Square, Room 210, Darlington, SC 29532. The deadline to receive written comments was noon on Monday, ~~July 20, 2020~~ ^{January 5, 2021}. It was also noticed that citizens' comments would also be accepted at the meeting via telephone at 843-398-4469 beginning at 5:50 p.m. to be placed on the Citizens' Comments roster. Citizens' comments would be heard during the Citizens'

Comments segment of the agenda and governed by Section 2-85 of Darlington County Code of Ordinances.

As the meeting was being live-streamed, the County Administrator provided the telephone number for citizens to call in to make comments during the Citizens' Comments segment of the meeting. After a brief pause in the meeting to give citizens time to call in to make comments, it was noted that there was one call wherein the caller was directed to contact Darlington City Council to speak about issues regarding the City. The County Administrator confirmed that the staff did not receive any written comments or requests prior to the meeting.

Personal Appearances

There were no Personal Appearances.

Consent Agenda

There were no Consent Agenda items.

Approval Of Minutes - Minutes Of Public Hearing & Regular Meeting, December 7, 2020

MOTION was made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Ms. Thomas to approve the minutes of December 7, 2020.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ordinances

Ordinance No. 20-06, An Ordinance Authorizing Pursuant To Chapter 44 Of Title 12, South Carolina Code Of Laws, 1976, As Amended, The Execution And Delivery Of A Fee Agreement Between Darlington County, South Carolina And Project Dark Star And Certain Affiliates And Matters Relating Thereto - THIRD READING -- CARRY OVER REQUESTED

MOTION was made by Mr. Coker and seconded by Mr. Brown to carry over third reading of Ordinance No. 20-06.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ordinance No. 20-07, An Ordinance Approving An Amendment To The Agreement For Development Of A Joint County Industrial And Business Park By And Between Darlington County, South Carolina And Lee County, South Carolina, And Other Matters Relating Thereto - THIRD READING -- CARRY OVER REQUESTED

MOTION was made by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Coker to carry over third reading of Ordinance No. 20-07.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ordinance No. 20-08, Ordinance Authorizing The Execution And Delivery Of A Fee Agreement By And Between Darlington County, South Carolina And Project Team Providing For A Payment Of A Fee In Lieu Of Taxes And Other Matters Related Thereto - THIRD READING

For third reading, Mr. Stewart identified Project Team as PolyQuest Incorporated, DAK Americas, and affiliates thereto.

MOTION was made by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Coker to approve third reading of Ordinance No. 20-08.

The motion carried unanimously.

Emergency Ordinance No. 20-E11, An Emergency Ordinance To Extend Darlington County Council Declaration Of Public Health Emergency In Response To The Public Safety Threat Of The Novel Coronavirus ("COVID-19") Enacted By Emergency Ordinance No. 20-E1 on March 17, 2020, And Extended By Emergency Ordinance Nos. 20-E3, 20-E5, 20-E7, and 20-E9

MOTION was made by Mr. Coker and seconded by Mr. Douglas to approve Emergency Ordinance No. 20-E11 extending Darlington County Council Declaration of Public Health Emergency in response to COVID-19 through March 21, 2021.

The motion carried unanimously.

Emergency Ordinance No. 20-E12, An Emergency Ordinance Extending The Provisions For The Conduct Of Public Meetings By Means Of Electronic Equipment In Light Of The Center For Disease Control & Prevention's (CDC) Recommendations During The COVID-19 Emergency

MOTION was made by Mr. Brown and seconded by Ms. Thomas to approve Emergency Ordinance No. 20-E12 extending the provision for the conduct of public meetings by means of electronic equipment during COVID-19 emergency through April 5, 2021.

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolutions

There were no resolutions.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

Other Items

Appointments To Boards & Commissions To Fill Vacancies & Expired Terms & Address Attendance Issues

Since Mr. Flowers was absent, his appointments were carried over (Alcohol & Drug Citizen Advisory Committee, Board of Assessment Appeals, and Construction Board of Adjustment & Appeals).

Since Mr. Davis was absent, his appointments were carried over (Alcohol & Drug Citizen Advisory Committee and Board of Assessment Appeals).

Mr. Brown carried over his appointment to the Alcohol/Drug Citizen Advisory Committee.

2021 Schedule of County Council Meetings

MOTION was made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Brown to approve the 2021 schedule of meetings for County Council.

The motion carried unanimously.

2021 Holiday Schedule For Darlington County Landfill And Solid Waste Collection/Recycling Centers

MOTION was made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Ms. Thomas to approve the 2021 Holiday Schedule for the landfill and solid waste collection centers.

The motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Update

FY19/20 Audit. A copy of the county's financial report/audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020, was placed at Council's desk. Mr. Stewart reported that the audit contained no findings and would be reviewed in detail in April prior to the presentation of the Administrator's proposed budget.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) #4-CE-20-004 for South Darlington Fire Truck, \$451,000. Mr. Stewart explained that Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments approached Darlington County about an opportunity for a grant for a fire truck. The grant required door-to-door surveys which caused limitations due to the COVID pandemic. Since the Council of Governments had already completed a number of surveys for another project in the South Darlington area along Hoffmeyer Road and Summerville Subdivision, they, along with the Fire District staff and volunteers, completed the remaining surveys in that area and applied for the grant funds. Mr. Stewart announced that the county has received \$451,000 from the Department of Commerce through a Community Development Block Grant to purchase a fire truck for the South Darlington Fire Station. Although only one grant application can be made per year, the County will attempt to obtain this grant next year in another rural area of the county where all the door-to-door surveys will have to be completed.

COVID Update. Mr. Stewart reported that the county was still dealing with COVID and with employees being out of work. However, there has not been any trouble with maintaining services in the county. The county has plans and testing protocols in place, especially for critical and emergency services.

Ms. Thomas asked about the increasing number of COVID cases in the county being reported by the media.

Mr. Stewart responding that he had been sending daily email updates to Council members. The data included the number of COVID cases in the state and the county, etc.

Ms. Thomas was concerned about first responders having information about patients prior to responding to emergency calls.

Mr. Stewart explained that the county dispatchers screen all emergency calls and provide a special code if the responses to the questions indicate that the call is a COVID or

possible COVID call. The dispatchers have special protocols to follow for every call. Therefore, the first responders are given every indication as to whether there is a possibility that the patient has or might have COVID.

Ms. Thomas asked whether the staff had any information on the availability of COVID vaccines in Darlington County.

Mr. Stewart responded that the county's medical health provider has not received COVID vaccines. However, McLeod has extended the offer to vaccinate walk-ins for anyone in the 1A, 1B, and 1C categories. Management of all first responders in the county, including the municipalities and various county agencies, have been notified about the availability of COVID vaccines at McLeod. It was Mr. Stewart's understanding that the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) in Florence may soon offer this service as well. Carolina Pines Hospital did not receive enough additional vaccines to extend such an offer.

Ms. Thomas asked whether the county will be applying for another CDBG grant.

Mr. Stewart responded that the county will apply for this CDBG grant every year. The key to the grant is the completion of the surveys to prove the income level per household, the number of people in each household, etc. There cannot be assumptions. Actual contacts must be made with individual households.

Requests / Comments - Members Of Council

Mr. Coker welcomed Mrs. Godbold to Council and asked everyone to be safe.

Mr. Douglas welcomed Mrs. Godbold to Council and requested that the county clean up the trash along South Springville Road near Mechanicsville.

Mr. Brown welcomed Mrs. Godbold to Council and extended his assistance. He did not know who initiated the search for the CBDG grant funds for the fire truck. However, this was a windfall for the county. He expressed appreciation to the Council Of Governments and the staff.

Mr. Stewart pointed out that the Council of Governments brought the availability of this grant to the county's attention.

Mr. Brown expressed his condolences to the family of Mr. Steve Tinney. Mr. Tinney died on December 21. He was the owner of Oak Manor, a personal friend, and an integral part of the county and City of Hartsville. Mr. Brown briefly talked about Mr. Tinney's dedicated and passionate service on the county's Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee for approximately 13 years. He offered a card for Council members to sign to send to Mr. Tinney's family.

Mr. Brown then talked about the increasing number of COVID cases and expressed his appreciation for the local hospitals, first responders, and staff.

Ms. Thomas welcomed Mrs. Godbold to Council and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mrs. Godbold thanked everyone for their welcome, the staff for their assistance, and the citizens of Council District 1 for extending her this opportunity to serve. She looks forward to working on Council. Mrs. Godbold asked everyone to adhere to COVID protocols to protect each other.

Chairman Hudson requested cleanup along Bosmith Road. He briefly commented about the positive change for EMS employees and requested prayer for everyone recovering from COVID.

Vote For Executive Session

There was not a vote for Executive Session.

Adjournment

MOTION was made by Mr. Brown to adjourn the meeting. There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



J. Janet Bishop
Clerk to Council



Bobby Hudson, Chairman
Darlington County Council

Approved at meeting of February 1, 2021.