CITY OF DARLINGTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT BALDWIN GYM 300 SANDERS STREET, DARLINGTON, SC
OCTOBER 6, 2020 at 6:30 PM

Present: Mayor Curtis Boyd, City Manager Howard Garland, Councilpersons Bryant Gardner, Howard Nettles, Elaine Reed, Sheila Baccus and John Segars. (Councilman John Milling was absent) Also present was Mrs. Lisa Rock, Mr. Alex Gainey, W&S Superintendent Mr. Kinsaul, Ms. Sheila Jones, Fire Chief Pat Cavanagh, City Attorney Kevin Etheridge, Mrs. Nancy Matthews, Mr. Lee Andrews, Mr. Brantley Jett, Mr. Dee Pilgrim, other visitors and Mr. Bobby Bryant with the News and Press and Reporter from TV13.

PRAYER

Prayer by Minister Perry Kelly followed by pledge.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES CITY COUNCIL MEETING SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to approve the minutes of our Regular City Council Meeting on September 1, 2020. Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Segars, Baccus, Reed, Gardner and Mayor Boyd all approved the motion.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion to approve the meeting agenda for today's meeting October 6, 2020. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Segars, Baccus, Reed, Gardner and Mayor Boyd all approved the motion.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

GREATER DARLINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - MRS. NANCY MATTHEWS

Mrs. Nancy Matthews said that the Darlington Chamber has four new members, 1) M&M Alterations, Vertis Academy which is a Charter School that's on the county line of Florence and Darlington; Dr. R.V, D&S Communications and Habitat for Humanity. She said they have an existing member who is considering a "Business After Hours" at the end of October assuming we can do that with social distancing. Mrs. Matthews said the Chamber is still planning to have Fright Fest on October 31st. Mrs. Matthews said as you recall we were unable to do Freedom Fest this summer. She said Fright Fest is planned for 2 PM to 7 PM and there will be food trucks, arts and crafts, carnival rides, trunk or treat and they will follow all of the CDC guidelines for social distancing. Councilman Howard Nettles asked, "How much are the rides for the kids"? He asked if they had to buy tickets. Mrs. Matthews said it is by ticket and she thinks they are a $1. She said, "There is the suggestion that there will be a donor who will allow them to hand out tickets to kids who are there, but that hasn't been confirmed and they don't have that money yet,

but she hopes that's going to be forthcoming". Mayor Boyd asked if it's still on the schedule for fireworks and Mrs. Matthews said, "Yes and all that has been approved and worked out". Mrs. Matthews said there will be trunk-or-treat and she hopes that would be an opportunity for kids to participate in Halloween. She said many churches do that too, but they do have churches participating and even though it's not recommended to do trick-or-treat this year we think we can manage that. Mrs. Matthews said everything will be spread out on the Square. Mr. Garland asked what the hours were for the festival? Mrs. Matthews said it starts at 2:00 PM and ends at 7:30. She said most likely all of the other activities will conclude around 7:00 PM so that the fireworks can take place and they can get people home by 7:30. Mrs. Matthews said the fireworks will be Mayor Curtis Boyd's property.

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

Ms. Delores Bess with Pee Dee Coalition the Trauma Counselor/Advocate for Darlington County. Ms. Bess said, thank you so much for the space at 105 Orange Street. She said even though we are in a pandemic they serve so many victims there. They are still serving and assisting with orders of protection and she's doing counseling virtually to keep the family safe. Ms. Bess said that's working out really well. Ms. Bess said they do have people that come to the office that needs assistance with the order of protection or they may need assistance with finding a safe place to go. She said they do have their 24-hour shelter which is located in Florence and they have their transitional shelter which is located in Wallace. Mrs. Bess said from 2018 to 2019 they have served 77 clients/victims and some of those victims are ongoing. She said she does a virtual support group on Wednesdays from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM and that also to keep the families safe. She said a lot of the families they serve have children and small children and this is a way for them to stay home and stay safe, keep their children safe and still get the services that they need. Mayor Boyd asked if all of the women are from the local area and Ms. Bess said, "Yes, from Darlington County and quite a few are from Darlington City". Councilman Nettles asked Ms. Bess where most of their funding comes from. Ms. Bess said they get money from the Attorney General's office and they have some money that's private, but she doesn't have those numbers with her.

Dee Pilgrim appeared before council with concerns about the Old Davis Gift Shop. He said it's time for the owner of the Old Davis Gift Shop to say what are the official plans for the gift shop. He said he would like a straight answer from the owner. He said he would like an answer from the owner.

Lisa Rock read comments that were emailed to her: (these are the comments written and sent in by the citizens)

Dear City Council,
Thank you to those who voted yesterday to pass an ordinance requesting face masks in public places inside the city limits. While an ordinance requiring face masks would be more effective, a request to wear masks is a step in the direction of improving our current situation with Covid-19. If our circumstances deteriorate, perhaps we will reconsider the ordinance as a requirement.

Thank you especially to Councilmember Milling for sponsoring the ordinance and to Councilmember Reed for passionately speaking in its favor. Thank you, Councilmember Gardner, for directing a compromise in the language that allowed us to have some guidance in place. I'm one of many people in Darlington who suffer from health conditions that put me at an increased risk if I contract Covid-19, and I appreciate the members of council who voted for my and so many others' public safety. Although it was very difficult to hear council members speak via the Facebook video, I believe I heard a councilperson claim that we do not need an ordinance, that citizens should take a common-sense approach to wearing masks. As evidenced by so many who do not wear masks despite numerous close contact interactions and public appearances, we cannot seem to rely on common sense. I wish that we could. I believe that Councilmember Milling's argument to enforce mask-wearing with simple reminders is sound and just. If we can enforce speeding, seatbelts, and parking violations, surely our police department can remind people to wear masks.
So, thank you again to those of you who are strong enough to vote in the favor of your citizens. We see you, and we appreciate you.
Sincerely,
Landon Houle

I've enclosed a single page document that I hope can start the conversation among council or other interested parties about a water bill relief fund. I have little background or understanding about how these things might work, so if this document is trash, I'll hit the drawing board again. Thanks, and I hope you have a nice weekend. And, yo, what the heck was all that rain? Ooof. So sad to see that wall near the library fall.
Adam Houle

Water Relief Fund Proposal
September 18, 2020

Summary:
In light of the City of Darlington's necessary rate increase on water, sewer, and storm water fees, we believe the city can help provide organizational support to apply money raised through donations directly to the water/sewer bills of families in need. In order to make this process efficient, transparent, and ethical, we hope that the City will create a dedicated account to which individuals, companies, and nonprofits can donate. Funds raised will be applied directly to eligible accounts.

In order to ensure providing aid commiserate to the increase, we also propose that each eligible household receive no more than $30 dollars relief per month, which will allow the fund to serve those who will be most impacted by the rate increase. In addition, we believe that this amount could also be applied to shut off fees or past balances for eligible citizens. While $30 may seem a small amount, it is appropriate that the fund serves many citizens with a reprieve commiserate with the yearly increase. At the public hearings on the rate increase, the overwhelming concern was that the increase will not be able to be accounted into already-strained budgets. This fund would help stabilize those budgets. No one in Darlington should have to choose between paying their water bill or buying groceries.

Eligibility Requirements:
We believe that senior citizens on fixed incomes and families living at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines should be the primary recipient of these funds. Eligibility can be ascertained through tax return information or other forms of aid received, perhaps school lunch reduction rates. Residents behind on water shut-off fees should also be able to apply under the same eligibility requirements.

Distribution Considerations:
While an interest-earning start-up fund would be ideal, we believe it is more likely that funds will be applied each month to eligible accounts, zeroing out the fund each month unless we can raise more than we need. If this is the case, we'll keep squirrelling it away until it is needed.

Two models for consideration:

1. Applying funds to accounts most in need
2. Spreading funds across all eligible accounts equally

Both have their benefits and their drawbacks, and those with a better handle on the number of accounts and the severity of the debts will have more insight, I'm sure.

Benefits for the City:
A well-publicized and well-funded account for water bill relief will demonstrate to the citizens of Darlington and beyond that the city is addressing infrastructure issues while also recognizing that the city has a role in helping mitigate the financial hardships this will cause our most at-risk, underserved residents. It's also good public health policy to ensure access to running water. If this can help residents keep the water running, it should be enacted, supported, and promoted.

10/06/2020
My mother's name is Gracie D. Lyde and she is 85 years who lives on a fixed income from SSI benefits. The mere fact that the county has increased her water bill by $30 to repair streets that has nothing to do with the flooding in her community or area (Main Street, near IGA, Chestnut and Jessamine). So what residential areas is the city looking out for? She stated "the people didn't vote you in to raise their taxes and water bills, they voted you in to help the city not to do more harm and raise water bills and sewer fees. These same senior citizens and lower income residents are the same ones who came out and voted for someone whom they thought was going to do the City of Darlington some good. Who's looking out for the senior citizens? Who's looking out for the lower income residents?
Not the Mayor of The City of Darlington.

Gracie D. Lyde
206 B Ave
843-395-6779

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

SECOND READING ORDINANCE 2020-18 GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND $400,000

Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion to approve Second Reading on ordinance 2020-18 General Obligation Bond for $400,000. Councilman John Segars seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Segars, Baccus, Reed, Gardner and Mayor Boyd all approved the motion.

PUBLIC HEARING ORDINANCE 2020-19 ANNEXATION 325 NORTH MAIN STREET

Mrs. Lisa Rock said she has not received any public comment on this issue. She said this is the property adjacent to the City of Darlington. There was no public comment nor comment from councilmembers, so Mayor Curtis Boyd closed the public hearing.

SECOND READING ORDINANCE 2020-19 ANNEXATION 325 NORTH MAIN STREET

Councilman John Segars made a motion to approve Second Reading on Ordinance 2020–19 annexation of 325 North Main Street. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Segars, Baccus, Reed, Gardner and Mayor Boyd all approved the motion.

NEW BUSINESS

FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2020-20 LEASE CARNEGIE LIBRARY TO DARLINGTON COUNTY

Mr. Garland said, "This is something that Darlington County approached us with about half a year or so ago about them using the Carnegie Library". Mr. Garland then gave a brief history of the Carnegie Library. He said the Carnegie Library was built in 1920 by some citizens. It has served as the county's library until 1988 when they moved on North Main Street. Since 1988 it has been owned by the school district twice, the county twice and the City twice. The City has had it since 1999. Mr. Garland said we got grants through Senator Gerald Malloy, Representative Denny Nielsen, and Congressman John Spratt to refurbish the library. Mr. Garland said we spent $700,000 in city funds and grants to do that. Mr. Garland said we essentially mothballed the facility waiting for a day like this when someone will come along and want to use it. He said the County has promised to finish it interior wise and the exterior; and they will pave the parking lot and the stipulations are listed that they will be financially responsible for all expenses related to the library all exterior improvements must be approved by the City of Darlington. The County will be responsible for all utilities, and they will pave the parking lot as mentioned. They will make it available for community meetings as needed and they will maintain the property and liability insurance for the library. Darlington County will make one lump sum lease payment in the amount of $50 which will be for 50 years through the year 2070. Mr. Garland said they added something in there that after the year 2060 Darlington County can purchase the Carnegie library for $1.00 (one-dollar). Mr. Garland said this is a win-win for everybody because they will use the building and fix it up. He said they are also planning to relocate the utilities underground. Councilman Bryant Gardner asked council if they were fine with Darlington County purchasing the building for $1.00 (one dollar) after the year 2060? Mayor Boyd asked, "They are going to be putting about how much in"? Mr. Garland

said, “Initially, about a quarter of a million dollars”. Mayor Boyd said, “I’m fine with it. Like you said, it has sat there for 34 years and they are going to allow us to still use part of it, so it is a win for us”. Councilman Gardner said, “The whole idea behind this is just wonderful and I love it; it’s just hard for me to swallow giving the building away for a dollar I guess”. Mr. Garland said we can strike that last thing if you want me to. He said, “One thing I forgot to mention also is that the county is looking at permeable asphalt for that site too and it will help storm water mitigation.

Councilman Gardner asked, “Howard historically you would know more than, I guess, than the rest of us. John Segars, you’ve been on here for a while what have we done historically in this situation”? . Councilman Segars asked, “What”? Councilman Gardner said, “At the end of the last line that says in year 2060 Darlington County has the option to purchase the Carnegie Library for $1.00, I’m just curious historically what we have done or other municipalities”. He said it’s just hard for him to swallow. Mr. Garland said there are 15 Carnegie Libraries still standing in the State of South Carolina. There are a few that are used as libraries; the one in Camden is used as a museum. Mr. Garland said there are many different uses; sometime the county ends up with them, sometimes the City ends up with them and sometimes they revert to private ownership so this is a way to keep it in the public trust and to ensure that it sticks around because by the end of this agreement the building will be 140 years old. Mr. Garland said there’s no problem just to strike that part out because as you mentioned earlier it’s a win-win for everybody involved. Mr. Garland said I don’t think most of us will be around in the year 2060 and it can be decided by another County Council and another City Council. Councilman Gardner asked if it would harm the agreement by striking it. Mr. Garland said, “I don’t think so”. Mayor Boyd said we can make a motion to approve it minus that part. Councilwoman Reed said, “So if we take that out there is no purpose at all they just assume”. Mayor Boyd said they would just have to renegotiate it in 50 years. Councilwoman Reed asked Councilman Gardner if he was asking that we leave that out. Councilman Gardner said, “I’m not necessarily asking that, I mean I hope it stays in public trust, but 50 years from now they are going to have an option to buy it for $1.00 (one dollar) and sell it or do whatever they choose. Mayor Boyd asked, “How long have we had it”? Mr. Garland said, “We’ve had it since 1999”. Mayor Boyd said it’s been empty for 34 years. Mr. Garland said the City has put $700,000 in it. Mayor Boyd said I’m happy that they are taking it and there won’t be another empty building sitting on the corner and it’s going to stay in the public interest so it will be kept up. Councilwoman Baccus asked, “How much money have you put in that building”? Mr. Garland said $700,000 for twenty years”. Councilwoman Baccus then asked, “And how much money have we gained from that building’? Mr. Garland said, “Nothing”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “Exactly, so I don’t see no problem letting them use the building, maintain the building and keep the building up”. Mayor Boyd asked, “The $700,000 came from where, grants”? Mr. Garland said $125,000 came from the State of South Carolina; $149,000 from Save America’s Treasurers Grant from Congressman John Spratt and the rest came from funding from the City of Darlington”. Mayor Boyd said, “I’m fine with it the way it is, and I am more than thrilled that it’s going to be taken care of and not go to waste if they want to maintain it for 40 or 50 years and they are going to put a lot of money into it. Mayor Boyd said, “In my opinion they have a right to buy it for a dollar. Councilman Gardner said, “If they’re gonna be keeping it up for 50 years I’m fine with that”. **Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion to approve the First Reading on Ordinance 2020-20 Lease**

Carnegie Library to Darlington County. Councilman John Segars seconded the motion. Councilpersons Gardner, Baccus, Nettles, Reed, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2020-21 COMMERCIAL REFUSE CONTAINER FEES

Mr. Alex Gainey said, "Back when we were doing our budget work sessions, I believe I included this". He said he went over it when he did his presentation and you all talked about it. Mr. Gainey said, "When you all were doing the voting on the new fees somehow the commercial stuff got left out so he talked with Howard and they decided that they might want to present it to council". Mr. Gainey said, "When you look at some of the rates that we are being charged and some of the rates that we are charging, we are actually losing money". He said, "We need to at least adjust the fees so that we can at least break even if not make a little bit of money off of it". He told council that's the reason why he appeared before them tonight. He told them if they want to keep it the way it is, they can and continue to lose money or if they want to increase the fees so they can break even or make a little bit of money. Councilman Segars asked Mr. Gainey about the 1X, 2X and 3X on the handout. Mr. Gainey said looking at the top of the handout, they have 14 dumpsters that are dumped once a week. He said we are being charged $41.49 a month for those dumpsters and we are charging $37.50. He said we have two 2-yard dumpsters that we dump twice a week and we have three 2-yard dumpsters that we are dumping three times a week. Mr. Gainey said we don't offer a lot of 2-yard dumpsters for the simple fact that's where we are losing the most of our money. Mayor Boyd asked Mr. Gainey about the certain size dumpsters and what we are being charged versus what we are charging. Mayor Boyd said, "The 6-yard containers, for example, you're currently charging $75 but we are being charged $60 so the city is only making $15. Mr. Gainey said the city gets charged if they move the dumpster". He said, "Whenever they deliver the dumpster, or they have to get a new one or if it's a new business, you get charged a delivery fee". Mr. Gainey said if they pick it up, or if a business closes, we get charged for that and in the past, I don't think those charges have been passed on to the customer". He said if a business leaves or close down it's kind of hard to pass that charge on to them. Mayor Boyd asked Mr. Gainey to explain what happens if a business closes down. Mr. Gainey said, "When a business closes down and they call Allied or Republic and tell them we need them to pick a dumpster up, they charge us to come pick it up". Mayor Boyd asked if it was $125? Mr. Gainey said, "It's 125 or $150". Mayor Boyd asked about collection of the $125 and Mr. Gainey said there is no way to collect it. Mayor Boyd asked would we need to make a proposal to put that as an upfront fee? Mr. Gainey said that's some of the reason why we increased the fees so we can put some money in the bank so if we have to have a dumpster picked up, then we will have the money to cover it. Mayor Boyd asked, "On the residential we are charging $28.50 now, correct"? Mr. Gainey said, "Yes we are charging $28.50". Mayor Boyd asked, "How much is the City making on that because we dump that, correct"? Mr. Gainey said, "Yes, we dump that, and we expense for employees, and trucks, but we don't pay tipping fees on residential". Mayor Boyd asked, on $28.50 what does it cost us to dump that"? Mr. Gainey said, "I don't know the exact amount". Mayor Boyd asked him he has any idea of what we're making on the residential. Mr. Gainey said $28.50 covers your trash, yard debris, and recycling. Mayor Boyd asked, "Can we take, maybe $15 off as a ballpark"? Mr. Gainey said, "That's our primary source of income and when you look at how much we are

bringing in and how much it's actually costing to run the department we're in the red, so I don't know if we are really making anything by the time you look at the whole picture". Mayor Boyd went over some of the other charges noting whether we were making money, losing money or breaking even. I don't have a problem saying I'm the one that brought this up and call the attention because when I first started, I noticed that some of the containers before Alex took it over some of the locations had containers that were just sitting there and the city was still being billed for them, correct? He said the business had moved and 2 or 3 months later the container was still sitting there, and it came to our attention that we were still paying for that. Mayor said we are losing money on a good number of those and something needs to be done because we're not in the business to lose money but we're in the business to make money and be proactive with what we make so we can make our city better. Councilman Gardner asked about the sheet with the roll cart charges. Mr. Gardner said the residential has already been approved. He said we didn't address the commercial roll carts and we didn't address the commercial recycling. He said we can address that now or we can address it at a later time. Mr. Gainey said we have 35 carts for commercial recycling, and we were paying Pluffmud $11.50 a cart and we're not charging a dime for it so we're going in the hole all the way around. Mr. Gainey said we have taken it over and doing it in-house. Mr. Gainey said this is the spreadsheet I submitted whenever we were doing budget work sessions. Councilman Gardner said, section 1 says that the City of Darlington wants to increase the commercial refuse dumpster charges per the attached fee sheet. He said he understands it says commercial, but it still has a whole bunch of other charges that has nothing to do with it. Mayor Boyd said it says commercial container fees. Councilman Bryant Gardner said, "Yes, but your attached sheet has all the fees. Mr. Gainey said the residential has already been approved. Mr. Gainey said I went over all of this whenever we were doing the budget work sessions and whenever rates were being approved those were not approved, they were left out. Councilman Gardner said, "Now I've got to approve a document that says go to the next page and see what we are going to be charging he said there's some on there that we have approved, or we didn't approve previously. He said I guess you have to know what's been passed and what's not been passed. Mr. Gainey said Howard asked me to get the breakdown sheet and I put this together the first of the year, so I resubmitted this to Howard. Mr. Gainey said I can take everything off the bottom if you want me to. Councilman Gardner saying this is for the record and we just need to be a little clearer. Mayor Boyd said, "He has on there commercial fees". Councilwoman Reed tried explaining to Councilman Gardner, but he said he's not confused. Councilman Gardner said, "What I'm saying is you have commercial recycling at the bottom, and we aren't doing anything with that tonight, correct"? Councilman Gardner asked, "When we came here tonight, we were not planning to do anything with it, am I wrong"? Councilman Reed said, "No". Councilman Gardner said, "What I'm saying is, down there at the bottom, you go to the first page and look at its actual law and the ordinance we're passing it's suggesting the fine and rate increase is on the following page but the rate increase on the following page is not that increase". Councilwoman Reed said, "We voted on the residential part of it and this time we need to vote on the commercial part". Mayor Boyd said, '"Which will include (and we can spell it out) all dumpster sizes and charges, our roll carts for commercial and commercial recycling is what needs to be approved". Councilman Gardner said, "I wish we could do that, but I don't think we can, because don't, we have to publicize this"? Councilwoman Reed said, "But we did that

before". Councilman Gardner asked, "Lisa did we advertise the recycling"? Councilwoman Reed said, "I'm saying, when we passed it for the residential the same language over here included residential and didn't have all of these things on here". She said, "The same thing we're doing now we did it for residential and we really need to pass it". Councilman Gardner said, "I have no problem passing the commercial side, I just think the attached second page should be a little more specific". Mr. Gainey said, "Bryant If you would like to pass the dumpster tonight, I would be more than happy to come back to you next month with commercial roll carts and the commercial recycling". Councilman Gardner said, "I've got no problem with the commercial recycling doing that next month. I'd rather do that, I guess". Mayor Boyd said, "So you were saying because of section 1 it just says, "dumpster charges" it should say "dumpster and recycling"? Councilman Gardner said, "I just wish section one was a carbon copy of what it lists or define, I guess. He said section one should just have dumpsters and it shouldn't have anything below it". Councilman Gardner said, "If we're going to tax the commercial recycling, I think we'll have to wait a month and will have to publicize it, if I'm not mistaken". Councilman Gardner asked, "Don't we have to advertise a fee increase"? Mr. Garland was looking for City Attorney Kevin Etheridge, but he was not in the building. Councilman Gardner asked Mr. Garland if he could answer that and Mr. Garland said, "Yes we do". Mr. Garland said since it was a legal question, he was going to refer it to City Attorney Kevin Etheridge. Councilman Gardner said, "I'm fine, I guess. What I'm asking is the second page that we produce it in the minutes and delete all of the stuff that doesn't relate to it". Mayor Boyd said, "That's fine, just come back and do it next month". Councilman Gardner said, "No, you don't have to come back, I think we can pass it". Mayor Boyd asked, "We can't just amend it and say dumpster and recycling"? Councilman Gardner said, "I don't think anything needs to be amended, I think we can pass it as it is, but I don't think we can have all this extra stuff on there that has nothing to do with it". Councilman Gardner said, it says on the first page section 1 refers to the attached fee schedule and I think the fee schedule should just be indicative of what we are actually passing and nothing else". Councilman John Segars said to change the first sentence where it says "commercial refuse dumpster fees" to say "commercial dumpster and roll cart fees" instead. Councilman Gardner said, "You can't do that unfortunately because we haven't advertised those other things". Councilwoman Reed said, "It does refer to the attached sheet and that is for our information". Councilwoman Reed asked, "If you take the back sheet off, then you don't have a problem"? Councilman Gardner said the front sheet doesn't make sense without the back sheet. Councilman Gardner said, "I'll make it really simple, take a pair scissors, cut the sheet off above monthly totals and it's fine". Mr. Gainey said, "It'll take me less than three seconds on my computer to delete that bottom part". Councilman Gardner told Mr. Gainey to send a sheet to Ms. Gloria and I think everything is good". Mr. Gainey said we're just going to do dumpster tonight and I will come back next month and do the roll carts and commercial recycling. Councilman Gardner asked Mr. Gainey about advertising. Mr. Gainey said, "I haven't advertised anything, I gave it to Howard". Mr. Garland said, "For this, we have not". **Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to approve First Reading on Ordinance 2020-22 Commercial Refuse Container Fees with the attached form minus the second sheet from roll carts down. Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Segars, Nettles, Baccus, Gardner, Reed and Mayor Boyd all voted in favor of the motion.**

Councilwoman Elaine Reed asked if there's any way we can invest in some kind of camera to put in her ward because they are having a problem with people dumping furniture and debris in the neighborhood. Mayor Boyd said there is the chance that we can purchase a deer camera and stick it up somewhere.

BALDWIN GYM RENTAL FOR CIRCUIT COURT

Mr. Garland said due to COVID-19 Darlington county is looking for a place to hold court that allows for social distancing. Mr. Garland said The City of Darlington proposed Harmon Baldwin Gym for such use. Mr. Garland said he met with the Darlington County Administrator Mr. Charles Stewart and offered them the use of the gym. He said County Administrator Mr. Stewart and Clerk of Court Mr. Scott Suggs came over to look at the building and they agreed they could use the space. He said they will use Baldwin Gym for up to six months and it is spelled out in the agreement they will pay us $750 a month plus the cost of utilities for use of the building no more than six months. Mr. Garland said they started as of October 1st. Mr. Garland said it is short term and if it was to be revisited later in the spring, we'd have to look at new terms. **Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion that we approve the Baldwin Gym rental for Circuit Court in the amount of $750 a month Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Segars, Nettles, Baccus, Gardner, Reed and Mayor Boyd all voted in favor of the motion**

E-SPORTS PROPOSAL – BRANTLEY JETT

Brantley Jett said he was asked by is director Lee Andrews to investigate and explore the option of doing E-sports with Florence County. Mr. Brantley Jett said E-Sports is not a normal game like Fortnite. He said E-gaming is a team building sport which is more like Stem, engineering and science and things like that. He said with team building, the kids learn how to code, they learn how to computer program along with learning how to play games. Mr. Jett said, "What it does is, it draws kids that are not interested in sports because not every child is interested in sports". Mr. Jett said a lot of kids just like to stay in the house and like to play games and are just not athletic and this draws a whole new realm of kids that are left out. Mr. Jett said investing in this is equivalent to investing in a gym or ballfields, but it's for another group of kids that are not as social as everybody else . Mr. Jett said he talked with Mr. Dawsey in Florence County and he told him he had a lot of kids that never played sports, have never done anything and wasn't interested in the recreation department. He said they offered e-games. He said they started up at midnight and within an hour and 30 minutes, they were sold out and they had to put kids on the waiting list. He said Mr. Dawsey said since they started this, kids who haven't played sports have ventured into sports because they broke into that social barrier so now, they have kids trying soccer and they're trying basketball. He said you have kids that are interested in sports that are coming over to this world and learning the computer side. He said the good thing about this is we are not only offering a sport, we are offering the kids something they can take into the future and they can learn how to build computers. We are offering them something in the future where are they can have a job. Mr. Jett said, "Right now Coker is offering $40,000 scholarships to play e-sports". He said once we get all of this set up everything falls into their court because they can apply for STEM grants and math and science grants and it will all pay for itself. He said Mr. Dawsey told him they had sponsors that were never interested in

sponsoring anything, that are sponsoring e-sports. He said right now Florence has a match scheduled and they will play a virtual match against Las Vegas. Mr. Jett told the council if they look at the quote from Asset Technology It has everything from the computer monitors, to the modem, the gaming chairs, the switch; everything that we need to get ready to rock and roll. Mr. Jett said, "The quote is from the city's Internet people and I was told that was who we had to go through because they maintain our server so they will be the ones working on the programming and keeping the computers up". He said another safety factor is it has a firewall so it's not like fortnite where somebody can come in and talk to the kids. He said in a time like this e-sports is probably the only thing you can do during the pandemic because you can be socially distance and don't have to shut down. He said you can play teams all over the United States. Right now, The City of Charleston has tapped into it, also Laurens, St. Andrews, and the City of Greenville. He said Mr. Dawsey told him that he has about 20 other visitors that are scheduled to come to Florence to look at his program so they can start. So, once they do start up, our kids will be seen all over the United States and all over the county. Mr. Dawsey has an event scheduled that when COVID ends the US Army will come in and bring their team to the Civic Center. He said the US Army has an entire E-sports team. The quote to get everything set up is a little over $36,000 which is a onetime fee and after that the program pays for itself. He said Florence helps us with everything because they are trying to venture out and get everybody set up, so they are willing to come in and help us with sponsorships and also help us find sponsorships. Councilman Gardner said, "Whenever I was talking with you earlier you mentioned how they use this system and then after they have that class or whatever you call it, that they will have play time on the PlayStations or Xboxes". Councilman Gardner said those aren't included in the quote so can you get another price"? Mr. Jett said, "I have it right here". Mr. Jett said, "What Florence does is, because they have so many kids, so what they do is the games are basically set up in teams-it's either 4&4, 5&5 or 6&6". So, he might have 12 kids in a session, and they might be playing 5&5 so what they did was they went and bought PlayStations and Xbox . In order to keep the kids busy, they can go over and play the PlayStations while the other kids are doing this and then they swap out so all of the kids can get a chance to play. They have adults that come in and play and the way they get the adults to come in and play is they come in as volunteers and they help coach. Mayor Boyd asked if the volunteers are screened. Mr. Jett said they will do a background check on everybody. Mayor Boyd said, "You have 11 computers is there one for the lead person"? Mr. Jett said they will have a monitoring station where they will be able to watch and monitor everything. Mayor Boyd asked if there is a fee when the kids sign up? Mr. Jett said we will charge $40-$45, but Mr. Dawsey said most everything will be taken care of by the sponsorship. It will be run like a regular baseball season or a softball season. Mr. Jett said Florence first started off with 10 kids and it got so big that it shut the system down so what they did was they broke them up into 10's and had 3 sessions. Mayor Boyd said, "Say you signed up 10 children, when they would meet, would there be a set time"? Mr. Jett said right now they have one session set up for Wednesday and one on Saturday morning. Mayor Boyd asked, "Can you have more than 10 children"? Mr. Jett said, "We can sign up 50 kids and every day of the week you will have different sessions". Mayor Boyd asked, "And they would stay in there for how long"? Mr. Jett said they would stay about two hours. Mayor Boyd asked, "For $45 how many times a week"? Mr. Jett said, "Right now we will be doing one time a week for 2 hours and they will be teaching

them the game". He said if we want to do smaller sessions, maybe two or three sessions and let them come in 2 days a week or staying longer than an hour or on the weekend, we can do that. Mayor Boyd asked if there are paid personnel or is it volunteer in there with them. Mr. Jett said, "Right now we're just using our regular staff". Mayor Boyd asked, "How long is the session? For $45 it looks like a 9-week, 12 weeks". Mr. Jett said we can set it up for 8 weeks or 10-week sessions like a regular season. He said what we're going to do is we will go along with what Florence does and he'll run it for 10 weeks. Councilman Nettles asked Mr. Jett if he has approached potential sponsors. Mr. Jett said, "I haven't yet because I wanted to make sure we could do it". Mr. Jett said he talked with Mr. Dawsey today and he is willing to assist us in programs that he's doing for everybody else. He has sponsors that are national sponsors that he will help us get, but local sponsors we will have to get ourselves. Councilwoman Baccus said, "So where is all of this going to be set up at"? Mr. Jett said, "Right now we have an empty room upstairs that we're not using". Mayor Boyd said, "Theoretically, if that team was making $500 then for two months @ six times, if that team continues to pay, then that one team brings in about $3000". Mr. Jett said what Mr. Dawsey did was he went and sold sponsorships and just to get started he sold them on a two-year agreement to lock them in, which we don't have to do that". Mr. Jett said Mr. Dawsey told him once we get started, and get it set up, they will come in and look and see what we've got and help us get approved for grants. Mr. Jett said then we won't have to rely on the sponsorships, but we still need them. Mayor Boyd asked Mr. Garland how would we pay for this through hospitality or through the general fund? Mr. Garland said we will use hospitality tax since it's recreation. Mr. Garland asked about the age limit for this. Mr. Jett said we will mirror Florence and right now they go from 9 years old to seniors in high school. Mr. Garland asked if the South Carolina High School League have anything set up for e-sports. Mr. Jett said they haven't yet, but they are looking into it because it is getting so big and a lot of schools are getting it. Mayor Boyd said, "Bryant you mentioned something about having a larger TV". Councilman Gardner said, "Yes" . He said the only thing I would like to add to this bid is there are no Xbox's or PlayStations included so if we're going to move forward with this add 2 Xboxes and 2 PlayStation's". Mr. Jett said we will be getting the Ps5's and they should be good for the next seven years. He said if you get 4, they are about $500 apiece so that's $2000 for 4 plus the tax would be approximately $2,400; we will get 2 extra controllers at $150 for each system so that's another $300 and then then the games and the accessories is about $1000 so you're looking at another $3700. Altogether everything will cost us approximately $40,000 including the games the play stations and the system. He said a lot of the things, once we get started, it will pay for itself because it's not like we have to buy new equipment every year. Mr. Jett said the good thing about it is, most of the equipment that we are getting, Florence Recreation had to go back and upgrade. He said with what we are getting it should be at least 10 years before we have to replace or upgrade theirs. Mayor Boyd asked, "The money that we make will it go back into recreation or hospitality"? Mr. Garland said, "The hospitality account". **Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion to approve e-sports proposals presented by Director Brantley Jett in the amount of $36,077.51.** Mayor Boyd said this does not include the PlayStations. Mr. Garland said we can get the extra $5000 for the PlayStations without councils' approval**. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Gardner, Baccus, Nettles, Reed, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.**

Mayor Boyd said, "So that it is clear, the motion has been approved for the e-sports proposal by Mr. Brantley Jett for a total of $36,077.51 for the 10 stations and the 11 computer stations and everything listed on the sheet.

TRICK OR TREATING ON HALLOWEEN

Mr. Garland asked, "What is City Council's desire on this"? Mr. Garland said, "I think CDC recommends that we do not have door-to-door trick-or-treating". He said the decision is still up to City Council as to what you want to do. Mr. Garland said we are having Fright Fest on the Square that day, so that will take the place of trick-or-treating, but some folks may still want to do it. Mr. Garland said he's had three or four calls already about people asking whether we were going to allow trick-or-treating or not. Councilwoman Reed said, "This is kind of like what you said (the Mayor) that you couldn't see mandating the wearing of a mask, so how are you going stop people from trick-or-treating if they want to go". Councilman Gardner said, "I'm going to say I kind of agree especially if we are allowing the Chamber to host an event on the Square". Mayor Boyd said, "I think we can encourage everyone to come to the event on the Square and wear your mask". Mayor Boyd said. "There again, and as we've said before, it will be hard to pull up to somebody's door and say you're not supposed to be trick-or-treating". Mrs. Lisa Rock said she's gotten numerous calls and comments asking for the City's direction like we do every year". The question is what time is trick or treating or what night is trick or treating. Mrs. Rock said with COVID, it is best if council makes some sort of statement to say, *"If you were going to trick-or-treat, do it on the 31st from 6 to 8".* Mayor Boyd said, "I would suggest that if a citizen of the City of Darlington doesn't want someone to come to your house turn your light off". Mayor Boyd said typically we suggest that trick-or-treating is from 6 PM to 8:00 PM, but with us having Fright Fest we would like to invite everyone to come. He said they will have plenty of candy and fireworks. Councilwoman Reed said, "Maybe issue a statement saying if you want to trick-or-treat do it in the daylight hours and you all are invited to downtown". Mayor Boyd said we could suggest that if they want to trick-or-treat do it from 6 to 8 PM but we strongly suggest they participate in Fright Fest.

RECEIVE AS INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

NONE

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Boyd said we know that drainage problems are an issue and roads being paved. He said that there are a lot of issues that we have that we are trying to always correct and make better. We're trying to bring in more businesses and more residents and we're all working hard for that. He said we are not here to raise fees to hurt people, so I ask that the citizens give us time to correct matters that have been going on for years. He said drainage issues have been going on for a long time and we have made the efforts with DOT. Mayor Boyd said the news reporters do not always clarify, but a lot of our roads are DOT owned; drains beside them are DOT owned and they collect the taxes on those DOT owned roads. He said our people(employees) go out and clean these drains and they go out and try to make our roads and streets drain better with what we have. We have already approved, and next Monday

Industrial Paving will start paving approximately 18 roads. Two additional roads that will possibly be given to the County will make 20 roads. Mayor Boyd said DOT has stepped up to the plate and is willing to take care of Wells Street after all of the collapses, which will make 21 roads; they will also take care of Russell Street which will be 22 roads that will be paved. He said it is also his understanding Reid Street will be paved and I think they just paved another street, so before the end of this year we will have about 24 roads that have been paved. Mayor Boyd said, "So I would say, if we do nothing else the rest of the four years, we have accomplished a lot, but we will do a lot more the rest of the three years that I am here because I believe in this Council and working together and we should strive to make it better. He said we have already done and accomplished a lot, so I ask the citizens of Darlington and since we just spent $36,000 on e-sports we all believe in Facebook. I ask the citizens of Darlington to please be positive on Facebook because Facebook is seen everywhere and when you talk about our town, talk positively about our town because I will be very blunt with you, I make $600 a month and I work 24/7 to do this job and I give it back. He said I don't know what the other council makes, but they make less than $600 a month and this is what we do to devote our time and effort to make the town better. We're making great progress and I'm very proud to be on this Council with you and work with all of you. I ask the citizens of Darlington to give us some more time and believe in what we do and step up to the plate with us and make our town the best it can be. Mayor Boyd said he would like to thank NASCAR for coming into town a second time after 25 years if I'm not wrong. He said we are having a second race, so a lot of great things are coming.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:05 PM to discuss Recreation Ballfields Design (The City of Darlington may or may not vote after Executive Session) after a five-minute recess. Councilman John Segars seconded the motion. Councilpersons Reed, Gardner, Nettles, Baccus and Segars and Mayor Boyd all voted in favor of the motion.

Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to end executive session at 8:28 PM. Councilman John Segars seconded the motion. Councilpersons Reed, Gardner, Nettles, Baccus and Segars and Mayor Boyd all voted in favor of the motion.

REMINDERS

Tuesday November 10, 2020, at 6:30 PM – Monthly City Council Meeting

ADJOURN

Upon motion of Councilman John Segars, seconded by Councilman Bryant Gardner, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Clerk & Treasurer

ATTEST:

Mayor