CITY OF DARLINGTON
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE COURTROOM/COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT
400 PEARL STREET, DARLINGTON, SC
TUESDAY MAY 3, 2022, AT 6:30 PM

Present: Mayor Curtis Boyd, City Manager John Payne, Councilpersons Sheila Baccus, Bryant Gardner, John Segars, John Milling, Howard Nettles, and Elaine Reed. Also present was Mrs. Lisa Bailey, Police Chief Kelvin Washington, Fire Chief Pat Cavanaugh, Recreation Director Mr. Lee Andrews, W&S Superintendent Charles Shugart and Vondell Brockington, Ms. Gloria Hines, Street & Sanitation Superintendent Alex Gainey, Ms. Rosa Hudson, Mrs. Trina Ham, Ms. Ernestine Lyde, Mrs. McDowell, Mr. Dee Pilgrim, Ms. Anna DeWitt, and other visitors.

Mr. Bobby Bryant with the News & Press was present.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Prayer by Mayor Boyd followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to approve the minutes of our Regular City Council Meeting on April 5, 2022. Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Milling, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA
Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion to approve tonight's meeting agenda for April 5, 2022. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Milling, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES
Darlington Downtown Revitalization Association- Lisa Bailey

Darlington Downtown Revitalization Association

Report for Council – May 3, 2022
After a busy April with the Taste of Darlington, our Annual Get on the Green Golf Tournament, and the Spring Clean Up Day, the DDRA prepares for the summer concert series **Saturdays on the Square** presented by The City of Darlington.

For our kickoff event, **Muddy Creek Revival** (Southern Rock & Country) will perform on **Saturday, May 14, from 7 to 10 p.m. on the Public Square.** The Darlington Cruisers plan to continue their monthly car shows during the concerts, and we have a solid group of food trucks scheduled to attend. Thanks to Pepsi, Fiber Industries, Belk Funeral Home, and Wilson Senior Care, AND Thank you to the community for supporting our efforts!

The slate of bands continues with **Mike Taylor & the Holiday Band (Beach Music Hall of Fame) on June 11, The Saxxy Keyz (Jazz) on July 9, The Rick Strickland Band (Beach Music Hall of Fame) on August 13, John King (Country – Songwriter for Hootie & the Blowfish in 2015) on September 10.** Finally, **Level 10 Band & Show** will help us close out 2022 at the downtown New Year's Eve Party again this year! Businesses wishing to participate can contact my office.

The DDRA continues our monthly **Member Breakfasts at 8 a.m. on Thursday, May 26, at Taki's Diner, 609 Pearl St.** These meals are at no charge for members and a small $5 fee towards the meal for all others. The event, typically on the last Thursday of the month through October, allow our businesses to build connections and strengthen our local economy.

In the meantime, **we continue to promote Darlington and its businesses on social media and through our News Alert System each week.** Our alerts reach more than 2,700 people! We continually update our Web page, www.BuildUpDarlington.org, where individuals can submit information or sign up to receive these alerts.

GREATER DARLINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Ms. Brook Sylvester said Freedom Fest is June 25th in the Square from 4-9 pm. They will have six rides at the carnival. She said they are raising money for that right now and they are taking vendor applications as well. The first Saturday of every month there will be a bluegrass festival at the Grand Old post office. She said they do have complimentary tickets and if you are interested you can call her or text her at 843-307-9611. Ms. Sylvester said they gave the following awards at their membership banquet: Rising Star: Down by the Creek Boutique; Small Business award: Pee Dee Treasures; Big Business award: Fiber Industries; Educator of the Year: Dr. Jeffery Tadlock; Healthcare award: Free Medical Clinic; Community Pride award went to Darlington Garden Club as well as the Beautification Board; Board Member of the Year: Anna DeWitt and Lifetime Achievement went to Mr. Roosevelt Scott. She said they still have the I Love Darlington, Lamar & Society Hill t-shirts. This Friday Takis Diner will have their Race Party from 6:00pm-10:00pm with live music by Preston Duffee. Ms. Sylvester said Carrie Royal works at Fiber Industries, and she is a chemical process area leader. She has been awarded the Women in Manufacturing STEP Ahead Award. This month is Stroke Awareness Month, so Carolina Pines is having two events this month. The first is a Lunch & Learn on Thursday May 12th from 12:00pm-1:00pm at Carolina Pines. The second event is a free community event for Stroke Awareness on Saturday May 21st from 9:00am-12:00pm. There will be door prizes valued over $600, an interactive kid's corner and stroke prevention education. First Baptist Church will have Vacation Bible School the week of June 12th-16th from 6:00pm-8:00pm for kids ages 3K - fifth grade. Councilman Nettles asked how much are the rides for the children? The rides are free for the kids.

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

*Council may have open discussion with citizens after meeting
*Disruptive behavior is not permitted

Mrs. Denise Stanley said she wanted to thank the Council for their support as far as her restaurant is concerned. She said she still has carpentry work that's lacking on the front of her building. Ms. Stanley said she is waiting on some equipment that she ordered. She said her sign should be coming in sometime this week. She said she made the mistake of paying for the carpentry work before they finished the work. She said she is pleased with the number of people that have stopped by to wish her well because that means a whole lot. Ms. Stanley said at her point and time in completing this project it's going to be a nice-looking project and it will really make Darlington stand out. Councilman Nettles asked Ms. Stanley if she's going to have a grand opening. Ms. Stanley said I plan to have a grand opening. I have not set a date for that as of yet because I want to try to get most of my stuff done so that I can get you all to taste the food ahead of time and see what you think. Councilman Nettles told her to reach out to the Chamber and see if they might be able to guide her a little bit and help you with that grand opening and get you some publicity that you might not regularly have access to. Mayor Boyd asked Ms. Stanley if this was her first time being in business. Ms. Stanley said, "Yes, I worked with my brother, but I didn't have the business part. I worked for him, but I didn't know about how to do the business so I'm learning.

Mrs. Katrina Ham said she is a native of Darlington. She said her street (Jefferson Street) looks like a jungle. Whenever it needs to be cut I usually have to call Mayor Boyd to send somebody down there to cut it. Mrs. Ham said the snakes are terrible this time of year and they have started coming out. Mrs. Ham said, "I don't know why this street looks like this. They have these bamboo sticks going all the way up. She said they can only cut a streak, that's what they say. I didn't do all my homework because I want to know who owns that property because if they are not going to do anything….when Mr. Garland was there I was told they had to get in touch with the people, send them a letter out and then they would have to reply and then they would give them 10 days to get back to them. Mrs. Ham said, "I don't know what's going on, but somebody needs to do something and if they're not going to take care of the property they need to be cited. They need to do something because it looks horrible over there on my side of town. Mrs. Ham said I really want something done and I don't want to call TV15 or TV13 so they can come and see how it looks over here. Councilman Nettles asked Mrs. Ham what her address is. She said her address is 133 and the house beside the lot that she is talking about is 113. Mayor Boyd asked, "It's the lot that's in front of you or beside you that you're talking about". Mrs. Ham said, "No it's not beside me, it's a couple of doors down like you're coming into Jefferson Street from by the Oil Mill". She said it's three houses and when you get to 113 it's the lot right beside that house on the left side. Councilwoman Reed said, "You know where Milling Street dead ends at Jefferson, it starts there at that lot and goes towards Washington". Councilwoman Reed said, "It's been that way for years and like she said she has to ask each year". Mayor Boyd said, "What I've asked for is every lot in town to get cleaned up and give them a notice. If they don't get the notice, get it cleaned up, then we go clean it up and we give them a bill. If they don't pay the bill then we put it on the tax lien. If they don't pay the tax lien somebody will buy it and then we'll get our money back. Mrs. Ham said this has been about seven years and they still haven't done anything yet. Mayor Boyd said, "We've got a number of places around town that people own. Some are local and some are way off, and they just let go and….Mrs. Ham said, "Well they must have never sent the papers out because I've been going

through this for a couple of years. Mrs. Ham said, “Anyway, see what you can do”. Councilman Milling asked, “Do you know whether or not this person who owns it is deceased or whether we’re dealing with living people”. Mrs. Ham said, “From what I heard, the person who owns it is not deceased”. I don’t know, I started to go to the courthouse to inquire about it, but like I said, I didn’t do all my homework”. Councilman Milling said, we’ll check on it. Mrs. Ham said, “They could be but after so many years….and they cut a little streak through there because they say they are not allowed to go on the property and do anything, but it looks horrible over there”. Mrs. Ham said the address is 133 but the property beside it is 113 and he keeps his grass cut but on the side of him you can’t do nothing”. She said what’s going to happen is the road when people are passing, you can’t get by, you’ve got to wait for one person to come by before the other car can go by because you can cause a wreck. The way the trees are growing up and over, and out into the street…Mrs. Ham said, “You know when I called you last year, you came and had that little streak cut through there. We’ll, it’s time again”. Councilwoman Baccus said, you can go on the county tax assessor website and see who owns it. Councilwoman Baccus said, you don’t have to go, you can do it on the internet. She told Mrs. Ham if she calls her tonight when she gets home, she’ll look it up for her.

Mrs. Gloria Hines read a letter she wrote. The water bill was raised too much during a pandemic you couldn’t lower it because the city used the raise to secure a bond to get the work done on Broad Street. Now you have a vacant building ordinance. When the council started the talk about the vacant commercial buildings downtown it seems it moved swiftly to vacant property all over the city. Was the vacant property talked about in the council meeting? Was it done outside of the meeting? I’m for maintaining your property keeping my yard manicured paying my taxes but not saying that I can’t hold my house if I’m not ready to sell it or hold it until I return or even for a summer home without being charged extra because it’s vacant; that’s ludicrous and it seems to be double dipping; a way for buyers to buy up citizens property who can’t afford to pay the fee for the house being vacant. Everyone is not blessed to be born with a silver spoon in their mouth or with a high paying job. It's enough to pay the taxes and maintain the yard. No money for high labor and supplies for high dollar certified workers. One paper that I have shows a fee up to $1,000 for one to three years and the other paper that I have says $3000 for one to three years. Other fees are on the sheet also. Which one is correct? I guess the owner of a vacant house for longer than 30 days must register to get a form for property exemption. The vacant property could be used as storage, could be a vacation home, could be moving home in five years etc. Could that be used, or do you want to make the citizens pay extra fees? It seems like the city is asking too much from the citizens telling citizens what they can and cannot do with their property other than paying the taxes and keeping the surrounding area clean. Like I said before this is ludicrous.

Ernestine Lyde said my first reference I wasn’t at last month's meeting because of the weather, and I wasn’t feeling well, but I am referring back to the March meeting which I was here, and my first issue is where the mayor said, “*this is my meeting*”. She said my thing on this is we as citizens voted for you as the mayor of Darlington and when it comes to the citizens, that includes all. It just can’t be just about one person saying my meeting. Ms. Lyde said that’s just my feeling. I think there’s a respectable way of talking to each other. She said I was here when

you were talking to Mr. Lewis. He's a senior citizen of Darlington and he's been around here living in the city all this time. I think there's a better way of respecting people and that we can agree and disagree. She said my other thing is it seems like every time I come to the meeting it's all about the City of Darlington. She said we've got the oil mill that's smelling like crazy. You go around and your eyes are burning, and your nose is running . We have a lot of senior citizens there. They're not coming to these meetings because they're not able to come to the meetings. She said I've been at these meetings over and over about the same oil mill. Nothing's being done and it seems like nobody cares because they're not living around it. When you're living around this every day and got to smell those fumes it's not good at all she said maybe there's something you all can do about the oil mill. Ms. Lyde said you can't even come out on your porch because of the terrible smell. Ms. Lyde said she is speaking for some of the senior citizens that are living over there. She said I live around them, and I know them and that's not fair for us to have to go through this and we are constantly going through this, and nobody is paying us any attention. She said I've been coming to this council meeting over and over even during the pandemic when I brought up again about the water. She said it's not fair and everybody should be treated the same. Mayor Boyd said, "My understanding is we checked with the oil mill but according to code there's nothing the city can do about it because it was already situated for that type of environment, that type of business". He said, "According to my understanding, they went through OSHA & DHEC and everybody else and they are doing what they're supposed to do, and the city can't go over and close them down". Mayor Boyd said, "I agree it smells bad and again our hands are tied and council can't go over there and change that so it's not that we don't want to do anything about it". Mayor Boyd said, "Since you did call my name I'll address you. The other day me and Mr. Lewis talked with each other afterwards. He got a little feisty, I got a little feisty, but when I say that it's my town, so that the whole world can hear, this this is my town. Now if anybody would like to take it out of context, but it's also your town". As I said, "I don't have a whole lot of control over anything. I've got one vote". I'm the poster boy, I'm the mayor poster boy, but when anybody comes up for anything they come to the mayor. And I do have control of one thing. I'm supposed to have control over one thing; I'm supposed to control the council, the meeting, this meeting. So, when I say this is my meeting, it's all of our meeting we're here together. Everything that's done in the City of Darlington is not done because Curtis wants it. Curtis might want it, but he can't get it unless the rest want it. Mr. Milling might want it. He can't get it unless we all vote. Ms. Baccus the same way. Mr. Nettles, Mr. Milling, Mr. Segars, Mr. Gardner and Ms. Reed. We all want lots of things, but we all have to work together, so I am in control of the council. Mayor Boyd said, I don't own anybody. I don't even own myself but I'm happy to be here and work for everybody, but I do try to control the council and keep it to where we all work together and not get out of hand. Ms. Lyde said I understand that but just at that last meeting…. Mayor Boyd said, "But again, with the oil mill and all that we're trying and so that everybody understand…. with the water bill. They keep bringing up about the water bill, we're here to try to make sure things……people asked us to lower it back and we would love to lower it back, but we can't. We've got to try and get control of what we've got where we can get us out of the hole where we can provide good clean water and everything else for everybody". Councilwoman Reed said, "A couple of months ago I did go and meet with the manager at the mill, and they are trying to find some kind of filter. She said it hasn't come yet, but because of the complaints and they are

aware of the community….My understanding is they are trying to get some type of filter to help with the smell". Councilwoman Reed said, "They did indicate that what you are smelling is not harmful to you according to DHEC. Councilwoman Baccus said, "As far as that water bill is concerned I have checked with other cities around us in different areas and our water bills are questionable meaning that cities around us that I have spoken with have periodically checked to make sure the meters are working properly". She said The City of Darlington hasn't had their meters checked to make sure they are working properly. They are only going to go along with charging you excessively and not even wanting to find out whether the meters are working properly or not. Councilwoman Baccus said, "I brought it to Mr. Payne and Mr. Shugart that we need to periodically check our meters, but they don't want to do that". They just send out notices that "you've got a water leak" without verifying that all the meters are properly working. Councilwoman Baccus said, "I have citizens steady contacting me about $300 water bills, $250 water bills and they are checking and no leaks, but Payne and Shugart are refusing to even address having our meters randomly checked to be sure they are working properly". Mayor Boyd said, "They are working really hard to make sure…we've got a lot of bad pipes and things and all…. Mr. Shugart and Mr. Payne if anybody has a problem with their water bill they can always take it up to the water department and they will address it and see what's going on with it". Mayor Boyd said, "If the meter is running then that means there's water leaking from the other side. If the meter is not running and there's water coming out of the road that means there's a leak from our side. He said if the meter is running it's going through that pipe, it's going through that meter and that means there's a leak from the customer side. Mayor Boyd said, "The customers have always in times past, and I'm sure they will do it now, if they come up with a major leak then they'll address that and see if something is going on". Councilwoman Baccus said only if the meter is working properly.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

AMENDMENT TO REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING START TIME AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Bailey said she didn't receive any mail or emails concerning this.

ZONING DESIGNATION FOR PROPERTY AT RICHMOND & SPRING STREETS

Mrs. Bailey said she did not receive any mail or emails concerning this.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2ND READING ORDINANCE 2022-04 AMENDMENT TO REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING START TIME AND PUBLIC COMMENT, JOHN PAYNE

Mr. Payne said at the last meeting I proposed starting the meeting 30 minutes earlier at 6:00 pm. He said I also have a proposal which you all asked me to change and which I have included total time allotted for public comment at 30 minutes which was council's request and speakers will be allowed up to 5 minutes. **Councilwoman Reed made a motion to approve the 2nd Reading of Ordinance 2022-04 Amendment to the regular city council meeting start time and public comment. Councilman Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, Nettles, Baccus, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted for the motion.**

2ND READING ORDINANCE 2022-05, ZONING DESIGNATION FOR PROPERTY AT RICHMOND AND SPRING STREETS, LISA BAILEY, PLANNING MANAGER

Mrs. Bailey said this property is being cleared at the corner of Richmond and Spring Streets for construction and previously voted to annex the property into the city and now it needs a zoning designation. Mrs. Bailey said it previously for some reason was already listed with a zoning designation on our map even though it wasn't in the city. The planning commission reviewed it and an R-6 zoning designation which was on the map seemed suitable to them and suitable to the property owners so that is what we're asking council to approve. **Councilman Milling made a motion to approve 2nd Reading of ordinance 2022-05 the zoning designation for property at Richmond and Spring Street to be zoned as R-6 high density residential and this property is reflected as tax map number 164-06-01-103. Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Gardner, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.**

NEW BUSINESS

1ST READING ORDINANCE 2022-06 FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET IN TITLE ONLY, JOHN PAYNE CITY MANAGER

Mr. Payne said it's that time of year again. He said tonight is just reading in title only which suffices the law. Mr. Payne said, "What I planned to do is ask that on Tuesday May 24th and Wednesday May 25th we will have our budget workshops and we'll get everything ironed out there and either by the June meeting or early within June we'll have second reading. Mr. Payne said I've been working with the county treasurer, our audit people out of West Columbia and the county assessor's office. Mr. Payne said I've been watching the revenues because I mentioned when I interviewed for this job budgets….. and I want to make sure that we've got revenues sufficient for the expenditures. Councilman Milling said, "Mr. Payne I'm going to make a motion to approve it, but just for general information do we not need a public hearing on this"? Mr. Payne said, "We will". Councilman Milling asked, "And approximately when, since we've got some of the public here, approximately when will that occur? Mr. Payne said, "We have to post…Lisa I believe it's two weeks before final reading we have to post in the paper so we will have it then. Councilman Milling said, so we probably if we've got workshops on the 24th and 25th in order to have a public hearing and then have the approval we wouldn't be able to do that…or would we at the June meeting or would we need a special meeting? Mr. Payne said We do the workshops on the 24th and 25th. If on the next day we ran the advertisement and posted it per the law, we could do it…15 days would be early June. He said our next meeting is June 7th so that would give us time or if the council felt that we needed to go a little longer we could go into the next week. Mr. Payne said, "I just don't want to wait until the last week of June". Councilman Milling said, "I don't either. That's the reason I raised it to be sure everybody was aware of the time frame". **Councilman John Milling made a motion to approve First Reading of Ordinance 2022-06 which is an ordinance to make appropriations for ordinary municipal purposes for the City of Darlington fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023 to provide for the expenditures thereof and to provide for revenues for the payment thereof as amended with this being a first reading with respect to the title only. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Reed, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.**

INITIATING OPEN PERIOD TO ACCEPT APPLICATIONS FROM NON-PROFITS FROM HOSPITALITY TAX FUNDING, JOHN PAYNE, CITY MANAGER

Mr. Payne said the city collects a 2% hospitality tax from all prepared food and beverages in the city. The procedure that the city has used up until now is when any nonprofit wants a contribution they just came any time during the year. Mr. Payne said other governments that I've worked for had a period where applicants came and presented their requests, a committee was assigned of volunteers (citizen volunteers) to review everything and make a recommendation to council. He said it was open only for a certain period of time. If an entity applied, they were considered. If they didn't apply during that period they would have to wait until the next year. Mr. Payne said, "I'm just trying to get us to follow a more structured schedule so that you only have to deal with hospitality tax requests once a year". Mr. Payne said, "My proposal is after the budget is complete in June and July to accept applications and then between September and October this committee will review and make recommendations to council". He said by fall you can determine how much you want to allot to whatever entities….this will also give you the ability to determine as a council how much you want to spend out of your H-tax fund. Mr. Payne said there's really nothing to vote on. I'm just kind of looking for council's blessing to move forward with this. He said you can set up a committee several ways. He said the city has several boards and commissions and I believe we could set one up in that manner; or if you want to, this will be up to you all. Mr. Payne said each council member could appoint one person, or we could go and ask for citizen volunteers, and everybody submit applications. Mayor Boyd suggested that we include not just non-profits, mostly non-profits but I know there are for profit businesses hosting something that is beneficial to the city that if the committee decided they wouldn't exclude them as long as it's something that's benefiting the city. Mayor Boyd said council just needs to think about whether you want it to be us or you want us to select one person or how do you want to do it. Mr. Payne said, "Or we can open it up. We'd have to create a committee. We'll have to go through that structure and then let people apply or what might be more expeditious is just for each council member to appoint one person. They would only have to serve about two months out of the year. Councilwoman Reed asked, "After they receive the applications the committee then would submit that to council for council to make the final decision"? Mr. Payne said, "Yes ma'am and whatever the committee recommended would not tie council's hands; those are simply recommendations. Councilwoman Baccus asked, "But we will receive, even if they are going to make a recommendation of who they suggest…will we receive the whole list"? Mr. Payne said, "Yes, yes ma'am ". Councilwoman Baccus said, "I'm not saying just what they suggest, but everybody who applied". Mr. Payne said, "Yes ma'am". Mayor Boyd asked if everybody was fine with Mr. Payne moving forward with that? Mayor Boyd asked the Council if they want to try to do it where each one of us picks one person. Council members were fine with each one of them picking one person.

HOSPITALITY TAX BOND REIMBURSEMENT TO HOSPITALITY TAX FUND, JOHN PAYNE CITY MANAGER

Mr. Payne said at our last meeting we received legal counsel from our bond attorney. In 2017 the city took out a $1.9 million bond for hospitality tax revenues and it's down to about

$744,000, but because of IRS regulations and the tax-exempt status associated with the bond by June 15th of this year you have to have that money spent down to $285,000 which is 15% of the original bond. The bond attorney explained that we could reimburse ourselves for any legitimate expenses from the H-tax fund or from the general fund. Mr. Payne said I got with Ms. Pridgen, and you have a list of…. This goes back to 2019 because he said I can only go back that far, and this shows $461,845.35 that's been spent out of hospitality tax that we can reimburse ourselves. We will be moving money from the hospitality tax bond back to the hospitality tax fund. **Councilman Gardner made a motion to approve the hospitality tax bond reimbursement to the hospitality tax fund. Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, Nettles, Baccus, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted for the motion**.

PURCHASE OF MOWING TRACTOR FOR SPORTS COMPLEX - LEE ANDREWS, RECREATION DIRECTOR

Mr. Andrews received a quote for a tractor and drag machine for the new sports complex. He said that it is state contract through Revels Turf & Tractor out of Myrtle Beach. It is John Deere equipment. The quote is for a tractor with front end loader, a 72-inch bush hog, 72-inch finishing mower and a hydrostatic drag machine which is used to drag ballfields. He said the total came in right at $49,000 for two pieces of equipment. He said we can use it now and it will carry over into the complex. He said it can also be used out there now to cut the growth out there now. **Councilman Gardner made a motion to approve the purchase of the mower and tractor for the sports complex for $49,294.79.** Mr. Andrews said, "Before you go on I want to make sure that you know that that is two pieces of equipment for that amount. One is a tractor to cut grass and the other is a tractor that drags ballfields". **Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, Nettles, Baccus, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.** Mr. Andrews said the drawing from Mozingo, and Wallace came in this week and as you can see there's a total of eight ballfields; there's 6 - 300-foot fields and 2 - 200-foot fields; two clover pods. It has all of the amenities that we wanted except for the go kart track. To incorporate that in there it just wasn't enough area to accommodate the parking and the extra stuff that would go along with that. Mr. Andrews said everything else is included in there - pickle ball courts, beach volleyball, basketball, skate park, the amphitheater which is going to be an open space that we can host concerts, a frisbee golf course, multiple trails that you can go through (asphalted and non-asphalted trails), there's a parcel which is 2 acres that you can either lease out or sell outright to a restaurant or store. He said what we have in the drawing is a convenience store. He said it has everything we wanted and what we're looking at doing tonight is either you bless it or just take it as information, but the faster we can say this is what you want the faster we can get the renderings done and move closer to getting it built. Mayor Boyd said, "According to Mr. Mozingo, his layout was designed to save us money for the way the land is structured and actually using the pond that's there as a retention pond". Mr. Andrews said you can use it as a retention pond plus you can use it as an irrigation pond. Mr. Andrews said the reason that it has taken so long for him to get the drawings is because he was waiting on the topography survey so he could get the lay of the land and he could place stuff where it needed to be so we wouldn't have to spend a lot of money moving dirt. Mr. Andrews said the design is, if you're coming in from Darlington or the Hartsville way, the entrance is right

there at the red light on the other side of the water tower. He said as you come in you will come through a wooded area and it will open up into the complex . Mayor Boyd said, "We hadn't asked for the amphitheater, but again my understanding is, if he were to draw that we don't….we aren't going to be able to build all of this at one time. Mr. Andrews said, "We're not married to anything on this drawing". Mayor Boyd said, "The amphitheater where he has the meadow, from my understanding, he said that's about three or 3 1/2 acres". Councilman Nettles asked, "So is it done so that it's built in stages or can be built in stages"? Mr. Andrews said, "Yes sir. It can be phased out just as it is". Councilwoman Reed said, "I just would like to see us get started". Councilman Gardner said, "The only small change that I might ask for is the pond. Is there any way to enlarge it a little bit where it's really thin"? Councilman Gardner said he went kayaking and it's only like a foot to a foot and a half deep. Mr. Andrews asked if he wanted it deeper. Councilman Gardner said, "Deeper and/or a little wider". Mr. Andrews said that would be something after the rendering phase. Mayor Boyd said, "He can draw it now because there's still room there because to the right of that is trees and to the left is the amphitheater which we really don't want an amphitheater". Mayor Boyd said he'd like to have the green space there but if we can afford an amphitheater that's fine. **Councilman Gardner made a motion to move forward with our architectural rendering. Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, Nettles, Baccus, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.**

DISCUSSION OF OPENING CITY SWIMMING POOL - LEE ANDREWS, RECREATION DIRECTOR

Mr. Andrews said this past month we were approached by Mrs. Dyan Cohen and Mrs. Lillian Brunson about the use of the swimming pool. He said when Covid hit back in 2020 the pool has been shut down for two years, but it has been covered. He said he doesn't know what it looks like underneath the covering because the city has always contracted it our through a local pool company to actually run the pool itself because we don't have a pool operator on staff, so it's always been contracted out. Mr. Andrews said Lisa Bailey actually searched last year to try and find somebody to open it just for part of the season, but nobody replied to even bid on opening it. Mr. Andrews said they have contacted people on behalf of the city this season. He said they had a lady call back today and said that they don't do that, but she gave them the name of a guy that may be interested. Mr. Andrews said, "I'll be honest with you, we've been told that before and whenever we go out there to meet them and to show them around, they never show up. He said that's the predicament you are in as far as the city pool goes. Councilwoman Reed said, "I've had folk in the area that would like to see it operating but if we can't and it's such a liability….I don't know which way for us to go and we do not have anybody to…any of the pool companies to say that they will operate it. I'm not sure what to do". Mayor Boyd said, "I would like to make a suggestion. The kids need something to do but again that is a….I always wanted to have a pool in my facility, but they always say that's a money pit and it sure is. And it's a major, major liability and we've had people in the past that have lost their lives there so to have somebody watch it and watch the children there….I would like to suggest that we look strongly at putting in two splash pads. With the amount of money that's been spent there over the two years while we were closed; there was a lot spent over those two years. Mayor Boyd said I think that we could probably put a nice splash pad over by the stage area and maybe one over

by the Hampton Street Park for the kids to be able to play. Mayor Boyd said, “I don’t know. It’s just a suggestion”. Councilwoman Reed said, “I’m not opposed to the splash pads. I like those as well”. Mayor Boyd said, “We need to find out for sure what the maintenance is on the splash pad, but I don’t think it’s no where near what the maintenance is for a pool”. Councilman Nettles asked what the pool costs us per month to run. Mr. Andrews said, “Doing the study over what we’ve done, it would take us $25,000 to open it for three months”. Mr. Payne said, “To open it for two ½ - 3 months, it was just over $25,000. Mayor Boyd asked what was spent over the last…Mr. Payne said since 2019, $134,000. Councilwoman Baccus asked, “That was in 2019 & 2020”? Mr. Payne said from 2019 to most recent. Mayor Boyd said, “We questioned that last year at the budget workshop why so much was spent”. Councilwoman Reed said, “Last year the question was because it seemed like it was overspending, right? I mean have we been able to justify what all that is? What the construction or the repairs….Mayor Boyd said, “The last city manager that was here we questioned why those bills were spent and paid for and we didn’t know anything about it”. Mr. Andrews said “When DHEC tells you to do something to open it you best do it to open it, or they will shut it down. A lot of those safety concerns are passed along, and I know the pump was bad at one point and time, they redid some of the deck work and they did away with the kiddie pool. Mr. Andrews said all of that stuff was done in the past three years. Councilwoman Reed said, “So what I’m hearing, it’s necessary. I mean it’s things that was absolutely necessary if we were going to use it. These things had to be done”. Mr. Andrews said, “Exactly, and that’s an ongoing thing. That’s just not to get it to code and then it’s going to be at code; that’s to get it at code and you’ve got to keep spending money to keep it at code”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “So in order to run the pool this summer you’re saying it’s going to cost $20,000 - $25,000? Mr. Andrews said, “Yes”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “Even if we say $25,000. So, you’re talking roughly $8,000 a month. I don’t think $8,000 a month is a lot. Reason being is, Freedom Fest, we spent $15,000 on Freedom Fest for four hours. When they did the fireworks, we gave the Chamber $15,000 for firecrackers. So now you’re gonna sit here and tell me $25,000 for three months is too much for a pool. Mr. Andrews said, “I’m not going to tell you that. I’m just stating what we would have to spend to open it”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “I’m not saying you personally, I’m just making a statement”. Mayor Boyd asked Mr. Andrews if it’s $25,000 for the whole summer or is it $25,000 to get it started”? Mr. Andrews said, “The whole summer”. Mayor Boyd asked if somebody’s going to man it and maintain it? Mr. Andrews said if the City of Darlington pays somebody to man it with the salaries that I set up ($15 an hour for a pool operator and $12 an hour for a lifeguards) plus the startup costs, plus the chemicals, it will be between $20,000-$25,000. Councilman Milling said, “That’s if you can find someone to run it, which you don’t have”. Mayor Boyd said, “So there’s no more maintenance that has to be done to it”? Mr. Andrews said, “I don’t know. I really don’t know because the pumps haven’t been…Mr. Payne said there’s always maintenance to a pool. (***Several people are talking over one another, so you can’t hear what’s being said)*** Mayor Boyd said, “My question is didn’t they give you a bill, they wanted to do some work for $9,000 Councilman Milling said, “We don’t know what the cost might be in order to bring it up to where we could spend $25,000 if we had somebody to operate it. So, it’s $25,000 plus whatever is necessary to open the door and DHEC has not inspected it to tell us what it would cost. Mr. Andrews said, “Not yet”. Councilwoman Reed said, “And then this is contingent….can we break

it up if we got any kind of response from a company that would handle it"? Mr. Andrews said, "Yes ma'am". Councilwoman Baccus said, "And on top of that
Just think about other money that we've spent. I think we spent probably a quarter of a million dollars in Williamson Park to build some bridges to bring it up to par. Mr. Andrews said that was grant money. Councilwoman Baccus said, 'Either way, the money was spent in Williamson Park to fix the park to walk across some bridges". Mayor Boyd said, "When someone gives you grant money, and they tell you what you've got to do with it it's a different ball game. Councilwoman Baccus said some of that was city money. Councilman Milling asked Mr. Andrews if he's in a position to contact DHEC and see what DHEC says would have to be done while we're at the same time looking to see if we can find an operator. Mr. Andrews said, "We can". Councilman Milling said "That might give you a better idea of whether we've got a $5,000 upfront cost or a $50,000 upfront cost. Mr. Andrews said DHEC will probably not be able to give us a cost. They can tell us what needs to be done to get it open, but what we need to find is a pool operator that you all are happy with. Mayor Boyd asked Mr. Andrews if he can meet back with council before the June meeting and if we have to call another meeting to go ahead and decide…give us more accurate numbers so we'll know what we're deciding on"? Mr. Andrews said, "Again, if we can find a pool operator that city council is happy with that will come do that, then yes I can do that. If not, you can't make them come". Councilman Nettles said, "You're in pool season now too, so you're talking about people being a month or two months out". Councilman Nettles said, "I'm having some work on my pool and they are two months out". Mr. Andrews said, Neptune Island is opening on the 14th, so pools are opening. Councilman Gardner said, "So, let's get on it and see what we can do and let us know". Councilwoman Reed said, "As a plan B though, I want us to at least look into having the splash pads. Mayor Boyd asked Mr. Andrews if he can get prices on that and he said, "Yes".

PROMOTION DARLINGTON THROUGH CITY VEHICLE ADVERTISING – LISA BAILEY, PLANNING DIRECTOR

Mrs. Lisa Bailey said, "I was asked to bring you all some numbers for ads on vehicles. She said no businesses have contacted her showing any interest whatsoever on putting your logos or advertisement on city vehicles. Mrs. Bailey said, "We do have the price/bid and the price from The News & Press has been approved. Mrs. Bailey said we could advertise ourselves or our city businesses or "shop local" something like that. She said that is an option and if you were to do all six trucks, both sides of the trucks the cost would be $6,240. If you wanted to do some sort of monthly business of the month or something like that on a vehicle magnet it would cost $75 per magnet or $450 for all six trucks for one time. She said if you changed it every month it would be $5,400 so if you were to do that for an entire year it would cost $11,640. Councilwoman Reed said, "Maybe if we as the city advertised just for a few months and do it on a monthly basis, it might attract some other businesses to do it. Mayor Boyd said, "Once you pay the $6,240 the trucks are a little better, they are up there, they are advertising whatever slogan you want to put on there. The business of the month could be done every quarter so every month so that way you don't have to change it. He said you can do two businesses…one business on four trucks and another business on the other four trucks to promote your local businesses to make them happy and bring people back into the City of Darlington to spend money and to bring money back into Darlington to show our residents and business owners that

we appreciate their business, and we love our town. Councilman Milling said, "I have just a curiosity question. The proposal we have from The News & Press, they got the bid in 2021…Mrs. Bailey said, "It was for three years". Councilman Milling asked, "Are they still willing"? Mrs. Bailey said, "Yes, they were very interested in doing it and that includes installation cost". She said that's them creating it and putting it on the truck. Mayor Boyd said, "So the thought was that if you did a "*Business of the Month*" you can just change it to "*Business of the Quarter"*. Mayor Boyd said we can put the names of city businesses in a pot and pull out a name. Councilman Milling asked, "This $11,000 cost would be a city cost, it would not be revenue"? Mrs. Bailey said, "Correct. This is just the cost of the installation there's no….Councilman Milling said, "When we started we were looking at hopefully a revenue stream, but that's not worked out". Mrs. Bailey said the revenue stream would have been set at $6,240. Mrs. Bailey said, "To do all trucks both sides it would have been a significant amount above that". Mayor Boyd said, "the $6,240 is still hoping for a revenue stream because you hope you're going to promote people to come in and shop at our local businesses and put more money back into the town. Mrs. Bailey said we would be advertising the city. Councilman Nettles asked, "Can we just do one or two and start that way and see if that generates any interest rather than doing all of the vehicles and not knowing what's going to happen"? Mrs. Bailey said, "That's up to you all". Mayor Boyd said, "Sure. We can do the ones that go out like the picker truck or the garbage trucks. He said the garbage trucks are out more, right? Mayor Boyd said we can do the garbage trucks and then start with that. Councilman Milling asked, "Does that mean we need to tell you how many trucks to try it with"? Mayor Boyd said, the garbage trucks go out everyday so that would be the best place to start. Mrs. Bailey said the garbage trucks work twenty days vs recycling which is eight days. Councilman Gardner asked, "Do you want to do the "Where Southern Hospitality & History Meet or Shop Local, Shop Darlington". Mayor Boyd said, "I wouldn't do "Eat Local" because the people that don't have restaurants would think we're not supporting them. He said I would do Shop Local, Shop Darlington or Where Southern Hospitality & History Meet". Mayor Boyd said we could do a markup and bring it back and see if everybody is fine with it before we do anything or print anything". Councilmembers were fine with this, and the consensus was to use "Where Southern Hospitality & History Meet. Mrs. Bailey said since its two trucks (that's two trucks, two sides, that's four sides) you could do more than one of the slogans. Mayor Boyd said, "We'll do a couple of different markups for you to look at and that way you can decide if you want something different on both sides or if you want the same thing.

REVIEW BIDS FOR WATER FILTER REHAB AT PINE STREET/EDWARDS AVENUE – CHARLES SHUGART, DIRECTOR, WATER & SEWER DEPARTMENT

Mr. Shugart said, "Last council meeting you all asked me together a price or quote for rehabbing the water filter at our Edwards and Pine Street water filter plant. I advertised it on South Carolina Business Opportunity Division (SCBO) of the procurement services of South Carolina which is where the State contract purchases are located. It's legal constructive notice to all contractors or requests for bids for this project and we received one. Mr. Shugart said in our advertisement we said that they would have to be delivered here by 6:00 PM and he received one bid. Mr. Shugart opened the bid at the council meeting, and it was from North American Construction Company for $287,150. Councilwoman Baccus asked if this is in the right range?

Mr. Shugart said, “When we first started looking at this thing last year, the estimated cost would be $60,000. Mr. Shugart said, “When you put it out for bid, it’s going to at least double. Everybody knows that but we sure didn’t expect it to go up four times. Mr. Payne asked Mr. Shugart to explain for the benefit of the public what this will do; what this does for the citizens. Mr. Shugart said the filter itself……I’ll have to get into a little bit of treatment. We, in this area and it’s not just the city of Darlington, but everybody located in the coastal plain (we’re considered to be in the upper coastal plain) has a certain amount of iron in the water. He said iron itself is not toxic but high levels could be damaging to your plumbing and cause other problems, so we remove some iron. In doing so they create a lime ion slurry by the addition of lime and oxygen into the water in an aeration chamber. The lime ion sludge has to be filtered out of the water and that’s what these filters do. Mr. Shugart said the filters are large metal cylinders that have different sizes of media in them and the first is a layer of fine sand, then it gets into heavier sand and then it gets into a layer of gravel and the last layer is a layer anthracite (a charcoal filter) which gives the water a more pleasant taste. Mr. Shugart said, “We measure the amount of iron in the water prior to the filter and after the filter and at some point all of our filters are going to fail or begin to fail, and it should happen very, very slowly. When that happens, it’s known as “breakthrough”. In other words, the sludge or the iron and lime is breaking through the filter. He said that hasn’t occurred in any of our filters however they have all been in operation for a long time and the Pine Street and Edwards Street water filter plant has been in use more than all of our other water plants. Mr. Shugart said it probably does 80% of all the water that has been produced in Darlington over the last ten years or so. He said however these components just like everything made by man is going to break down but the cylinder itself, the metal is going to corrode at some point. The media inside the filters and the p gravel and the anthracite at some point is going to get clogged with this iron lime slurry that we’re creating. He said we are backwashing this everyday that they use it. At some point its going to get saturated with this iron lime slurry that its going to be impossible to clean it. Mr. Shugart said what we’re talking about is the cylinder itself, the interior walls of the cylinder are going to break down. It’s metal and it’s going to happen. At some point we’re going to need to drain them off, look at the condition of the filter and repack them and that’s what this project is. Councilwoman Reed asked, “At this point what are we going to do”? Councilman Gardner said, “What’s your advice”? Mr. Shugart said, “My advice…we haven’t had breakthrough, so I say that we wait to do this project and try to fund it in the next fiscal year through other sources. Either through another grant of some type or USDA RD loan and grant or just a loan from another agency-The State Revolving Fund. He said there could be a possibility that we could even get forgiveness of those loans through the State Revolving Fund so that’s real free money and not like grant money. He said grant money is not free but if we get forgiveness of the principal of a loan, which is free money. He said there is a possibility that we can do that. The State Revolving Fund has funded a lot of projects and has granted a good bit of principal forgiveness over the past year and most of those projects (he said he has a list of them. He prints them out every month and look at them) are water projects. He said they aren’t giving money away in the sewer projects, but we’ve got to meet some criteria for them. Mr. Shugart said I have talked to the guy that’s over that section…we more than once a month, since I’ve been here has tried to get him to fund some projects for us or do principal forgiveness and a project, but we haven’t been able to meet quite all of his criteria yet in any project that I’ve talked

with him about. Councilman Nettles asked, “So if you had a failure, theoretically, how long would it take from failure to completion to correct”? Mr. Shugart said, “With this project this bid is 90 days”. Mayor Boyd said, “What he’s asking is if you wait 6 months down the road, correct me if I’m wrong Howard, he’s asking if six months down the road and it does fail and we’ve got to go out and fix it, how long would it take”? Mr. Shugart said, “90 days or less. Now remember we have four of these…..Councilman Gardner asked, “Does it mean we can shut one off”? Mr. Shugart said, “We don’t really have to shut it down. It may be that we just don’t produce as much from Pine and Edwards Street for a period of time and rely on one of our other water plants for the lions share of our water. Councilwoman Reed asked, “Did we ever get the bid, the last bid for the lift station (I never heard anything back) at Limit Street/Farm Street”? Mr. Shugart said, Limit Street/Farm Street. We had bids to buy those pumps prior to Christmas time, but I couldn’t get but two bids and I asked everybody in the world for bids on those pumps; everybody that I knew sold them. For whatever reason, this council didn’t want to go with those two bids, you wanted to go with three. The supplier that that gave us the low bid said if we didn’t buy them now or in the next 30 days he wouldn’t be able to get them in 2022. He said he’s spoken to him twice since then and he still cannot get them in 2022 so that’s where we are. Mr. Shugart said we’re spending money in diesel fuel pumping around there as a temporary fix”. Councilwoman Baccus asked, “So when are we gonna…what’s the status of the Allen Street Lift Station that we got the grant for? What’s the holdup on that? Mr. Shugart said, “That’s a completely different project. That’s the CDBG that was awarded to us in September and it’s in design phase right now and I think they’re still doing surveys; or they were last week. Mr. Shugart said, “Allen Street, that project is not just the pump station, there’s a lot of other components in the city going into that grant; there’s force mains and gravity sewers and other things involved in that. Councilwoman Baccus said, “So you’re saying the project has already started. Is that what you’re saying”? Mr. Shugart said, “No, I said it’s in the design…we’ll have to finish the design work and then we’ll have to do solicitation for bids, then we’ll have to award bids before construction can begin”. Councilwoman Reed, “So let’s get back to mine because we were in the bid stage so work can be done, and this has been brought to my attention by one of the board members. Councilwoman Reed asked, “What do we need to do”. Mr. Shugart said, “I can do it again. I can put it together again. We’ll see what kind of bids we’ve got and see how much the price has increased since Christmas. Mr. Shugart said I’ll dust off the one that I have, we’ll use that as a specification, and I’ll put it back out there again”. Councilman Gardner asked, “Are you saying the previous bids are null and void”? Mr. Shugart said, “Oh yeah”. Those bids they sent there was an increase in price. He said I’d be willing to bet that this bid here tells us that if there’s a substantial price increase they are going to have to go up on those components. Mr. Shugart said, “I bought something at Lowe’s
and it changed price from the time I picked it up, put it in the cart, and got to the front the other day”. Councilwoman Reed said, “It was critical then, so I know it’s in the making….we need to do whatever we need to do to get that done”. Mr. Shugart said, “And if you’d like for me to, I’ll dust off those specs that I put together back before Christmas, and we’ll put it on SCBO in June or July maybe”. Councilman Milling asked, “If you’ll take a look at “Don’t Forget” paragraph and just….I don’t know whether you’d been able to utilize that source or not. It’s just something that came out from the Municipal Association to us and I…since it said infrastructure”. Mr. Shugart said he receives the magazine….Councilman Milling said, “It just mentioned the federal

infrastructure program and a web page that we could go to and get assistance in applying for those grants and I want to be sure that we were in fact taking advantage of those opportunities to get some of those grants as well". Mr. Shugart said, "Yes Sir". Councilwoman Baccus asked, "Who is doing the design on it"? Mr. Shugart asked, "Design on what". Councilwoman Baccus said, "…Allen Street Lift Station". Mr. Shugart said, "You all approved Davis & Brown to do that design prior to my arrival". Councilwoman Baccus said, "Ok, I just asked you who's doing it". Mr. Payne said, "Mr. Shugart, while you're here and while council is assembled, would you update or give them information on what's going on at Tallulah & West Broad". Mr. Shugart said, "I didn't know whether we were going to do it in executive session or whether you were going to call me back later or not. He said we have an emergency situation at Tallulah & West Broad Street. He said about a month ago right after the last council meeting we had a failure of a sewer line on Tallulah Street. He said it's actually down on Syracuse is where they noticed it at. It's known as a drop manhole. He said this is the first manhole after a lift station that the force main drops into. We assembled some materials, and we engaged a contractor, went over there and fixed one service; we thought we were done. A few days later the next service fails, so we camera the lines again and repaired it. We did this twice. Since then, we've had failure down the street. We still get sewer through this line, it's just a trickle through, it's not flowing the way it should and it's filling up the manholes and it's called "supercharging" the lines. So far to date, we've spent a little more than $25,000 over there. So, at this point we've got to repair these lines. We've repaired and put in about 40-60 feet of 6-inch line on Tallulah. We've rebuilt three services and it looks like we're gonna have to rebuild about five to seven more; we have to replace 280 feet of 8-inch line, 120 feet of 6-inch line. Mr. Shugart said I hope that all those numbers are less than that but all I've gotten together in the last two days is our contractor that we already have working over on the South Darlington pump station project where they are rebuilding four pump stations for us (Frank Horne Construction Company). They came over and gave us a quote on an emergency repair to that line and their price is just under $41,000 that's with us supplying the pipe and parts and completing the repaving of practically 200-feet of both lanes of West Broad Street. He said, "And, we're going to have other costs involved. We're still gonna continue it, just under $100 a day for fuel and pump rental and our folks going over to refuel the pumps, and we're going to have other costs involved too. We're doing the general contracting on this and we're hiring these folks as subs; rather than just going out and telling somebody to fix it and walking off; we're not going to do that.

Mr. Shugart said, "Right now the worst-case scenario of putting this thing back together and getting it going is just over $55,600. He said I really hope it comes in a lot less expensive. Mayor Boyd asked, "This needs to come from where"? Mr. Shugart said all of that money I asked you all to move last council meeting, I haven't spent. He said I asked you all to move close to $200,000 into a dozen different line items and I haven't spent any of that money. He said two of those for huge purchases, trucks…I want to buy two trucks, but haven't brought them yet so we still have that money. Councilman Nettles said, "Well the need for those trucks is still there right"? Mr. Shugart said, "It's still there along with the need of all those other items that I had on there". Mayor Boyd asked, "So what is your suggestion? Take it from those line items"? Mr. Shugart said, "For right now this is an emergency we've got to do. Mr. Shugart said, "We've got a pumper going down the street; we've got one street completely closed off on the western end of West Broad Street; one lane closed from Syracuse to West Broad and one

lane closed practically from Milling Street to West Broad". Councilwoman Reed said, "When you keep saying West Broad I want to know are you going to have to break up at West Broad and Milling where I've seen you pumping"? Mr. Shugart said, "That's at Syracuse and Tallulah where the pump is. He said where this is right at the intersection of West Broad and Tallulah. He said there's a cut in the road from the folks that operated the water and sewer system prior to my arrival and this area that sank several inches in the road and I'm real suspect at each end of that. I'm sure that they replaced this with new pipe so a certain section of that is new; however, where they tied that on to the old sewer pipe at each end, and no one knows, may have corroded to the point where that failed". Councilman Nettles asked about potential additional costs. Mr. Shugart said, "That is the cost. That's what I've given you all". He said the worst-case scenario is $56,000 to tie onto this new line or this partial new line that the old regime put in and dig into the next manhole which is all the way at the top of the hill at Broad. There's a manhole there and it's off the road and it's really close to a power pole and that's one of the reasons why I couldn't get anybody else to bid on it. He said everybody came and looked at all this power and looked at our sewer line and said we're not digging a hole over here. This guy said I've got a machine that will hold it in place and Duke Power let us do it and that's costing us a lot of money too". Councilwoman Reed said, "I'm asking because all of the residents over there want to know how long…knowing the details of what you're doing". Mr. Shugart said, "I don't think I'm going to have to dig Tallulah Street". Councilwoman Reed said, "Because see that's what you've got blocked off now". Mr. Shugart said, "That's where the drop manhole is that takes all of the sewer. It's coming up Tallulah and I'm having to pump around that, so I've got that blocked on one end. He said we're going to dig up the end of Broad Street. We are also going to have to dig some on Tallulah but we're not going to have to dig up the road, we will dig on the side of the road". **Mayor Boyd made a motion to approve Mr. Shugart to spend this money out of his line item to fix Tallulah and Broad Streets. Councilman Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Reed, Milling and Segars voted in favor of the motion.**

Mayor Boyd said, "I would like to clarify one more thing. Your name and Mr. Payne's name was brought up tonight and I would like for you to clarify a certain business without calling the name of that business". Mayor Boyd asked, "How many times did you change a meter because there was a leak there and you were accused of not fixing anything when you went way out of the way to make sure that things were taken care of"? Mr. Shugart said, "We checked that meter every day for three months including Saturday and Sundays and we changed it out twice". We notified the owner every time and the owners' plumber every time that we did. We had a third plumber go over, that we paid to check that confirmed this particular business had a leak and finally the owner realized that she's got a leak and she's looking for it. He said the real issue here is the testing of water meters and if this council decides that you all want me to test meters, I'll test them. Now the meters that we've got cost around $120-$180. That's what they used to cost, now they cost $560. If we are going to test them I'll assume it's for accuracy. I am also assuming we are going to get them tested for $100-$250 each. We've got 3,500 of them so it's gonna cost us $350,000-$880,000 to test them. Mr. Shugart said that's just how much it will cost to test them. It will cost more than that because I am going to have to put somebody in the office because every time the meters are taken out and 10,000 gallons run through them at three different speeds: slow, medium, and high and they calculate the accuracy at these

different speeds and then they reinstall that meter, we've got to adjust that water bill for the reading that for 10,000 or 15,000 gallons that went through it those people don't pay for. So, I'm just going to guess this job will cost $1 million bucks, it wouldn't surprise me. If y'all want to fund that project I'll be happy to get into that business. We'll start working on it as soon as you want otherwise I don't know how to do this. I've never seen a water meter operate or any type of meter without whatever it's measuring going through it; so, I don't know if we are just testing them to see if they work when water goes through them, and they don't when water doesn't or we're actually testing them for accuracy. And then we'll have to make the solicitation for bids, find the funding and get the project started and I'll be glad to do it. You all just tell me when. Councilwoman Baccus said, "Since you want to bring it back up I'll address it again. The issue is nobody said check all of the meters in Darlington. Who said that? I did not say that. I said cities that I spoke to said they randomly checked their meters. I didn't say they checked every meter and then when a citizen gets a water bill for $1,400 saying she used 80 something thousand gallons of water. Who does that? A laundromat can't even use 89,000 gallons in one month". Mr. Shugart said, "Sure they do". Councilwoman Baccus said, "And on top of that, this citizen started turning the toilets off, turning the ice maker off, turning the water thing coming into the building outside off and they're still telling you your building is leaking water. Leaking where? Everything is turned off. How is the water getting into the building? Everything is manually turned off". Mr. Payne asked Mr. Shugart over how months was this. Councilwoman Baccus said, "My point is, I'm not saying check all the meters. I didn't say that. I'm saying the cities that I've talked to around here said they randomly check their meters. That's what I said. I did not say anything about checking all of the meters and a million dollars". Mayor Boyd said, "I just wanted to clarify that you all have been working….Mr. Shugart said, "Mr. Payne's question, the water bill, if I'm remembering correctly, wasn't paid from like August until October-November so there were several months there. Mr. Shugart said we downloaded and printed all that information per hour; how many gallons went through her meter and up to 200 gallons an hour was going through that meter from 10 o'clock at night to 9:00 in the morning. Right now, in the past week or two (I haven't looked at it in a week or two since she realized she's got a leak), there were 10-20 gallons a minute going through it around the clock whether she's there or not and I've had men checking it every day. I've had my ladies downloading my stuff, so I've got huge piles of all of her data. Mr. Shugart said, "I just happen to have a guy that goes by on his way to work so it didn't cost us a lot of money; he even did it on his own time". Councilman Gardner said, "It seems to be a little discretion to say it politely, alternate opinions between multiple people. Is there a potential way that the city could test this, charge a fee and if it comes that the city is wrong in their readings then we absorb that fee? If the city is not wrong in their readings then the citizen whose property that is being requested is charged that fee. Mr. Shugart said, "That's the way it's normally done in a lot of places that I've been". Councilman Gardner asked, "Is that something Council is comfortable with"? Councilwoman Baccus said, "And a lot of cities I also spoke with said they randomly check their meters to be sure they are operating properly". Councilman Gardner said, "That's fine, but that wasn't my question". Mr. Shugart asked, "What cities were those so I can call them and get….Councilwoman Baccus said, "Like I trust you". Mr. Shugart said, "Well if you can tell me who they are, they would share their plan with me the same way that I share my plan with them. We're all members of SCWARN that I got you all to make the resolution for. You won't tell me what cities do that so I

can talk to them and see how they're doing, and we can tailor a program around it"? Councilwoman Baccus said, "Don't we pay you to do that job? Don't you suppose to know how that works. No, I'm not going to tell you who I talk to. I'm not going to do that". Councilman Gardner said, "I asked a specific question. I've gotten an opinion from Councilman Segars, and Mayor Boyd. Are the rest of you fine with that"? Councilman Gardner said, "If we have a conflict between the city water department and a resident there will be a fee set that we charge the citizen. If the error is on the citizen side then the citizen would cover that fee. If the error is on city side the city would cover that fee. Mayor Boyd said, "If they find out a resident has a leak and it's on their side and it's $1,000 water bill, typically have they not in the past if a resident or customer has a leak that you typically adjust the bill for them don't you not"? Mr. Shugart said, "If they have a leak we adjust it by taking the sewer off because the leak isn't going down the sewer line. And if they make certain repairs in a timely manner, they can submit their bills to Charlotte and the ladies upfront and they make an adjustment on the water bill". Councilwoman Reed asked, "Charles, have we established that the owner or this person that we're talking about that they agree that the problem is a leak. Is everybody on the same page"? Water department worker Vondell Brockington said, "Yes, she knows". Councilwoman Reed said, "The owner and the city is saying that the problem is a leak so what now? You just haven't been able to identify where this leak is"? Mayor Boyd and Mr. Shugart said, "That's not the city's responsibility, our responsibility ends at the meter". Mr. Shugart said we tried to help her, and we went in there and toilets have been running and she fixed those. Mayor Boyd said what I was trying to identify is their integrity that they have both gone above and beyond to try to help all the customers to make sure that if there's a problem with their meter, that it's fixed. Councilman Gardner said, "Back to my question. If we have a discrepancy between a leak and we're not sure if it's on the city side or on the resident's side, is the council comfortable with there being a set fee"? A set fee will be levied on whoever side the leak is on. Councilman Milling said, "I don't want to do that". Councilman Gardner asked, "What would you want to do"? Councilman Milling said, "I think right now we generally, if you've got a customer with a problem…if I have a problem I just call and say this is a big bill. I don't know whether I've got the leak or whether it's not being read, and they check it and they say it's either we didn't read it right or you've got a leak. I fix my leak and I pay my bill and things go away. He said I don't want the citizens to incur a bill every time an incident like that happens". Councilman Gardner said, "Just for clarity that's not really what this is asking about. What you're referencing is a leak on the property and what Councilwoman Baccus was referencing was whether the meter was accurate or not and a question of checking the meter to see if it's accurate". Mayor Boyd said, "So you're saying if I question and think my meter is wrong, for them to be able to check it and verify my meter is correct, it's going to cost the city what"?. Mr. Shugart said, "Just to go out and re-read the meter we do those 300 times a month. Mayor Boyd said, "His question is, if I question the accuracy of it". Mr. Shugart said, "If you have this question of accuracy and you just would not believe that the city water meter is correct or whatever and you wanted somebody to come in and test it you would have to get a price from a contractor and a Pur 1 meter for a contractor to come in here and to do what I described is going to be expensive. Mr. Shugart said larger cities have these sorts of things set up where they go around and test all of their big meters like every two years and the little meters I get them tested once every 20 years. He said a system that has 100,000 customers they try to get all the way around 100,000 in 20

years and ordinarily that's when you change them in 20 years for most residential meters. They always go down. I've never heard of a water meter speeding up, ever".

EXECUTIVE SESSION For the Purpose of discussing potential contractual negotiations for the sale of city property at 207 Siskron St. and to discuss an economic development opportunity just presented to the city. City Council may or may not act following executive session.

Councilman Milling made a motion to go into executive session at 8:24 pm . For the Purpose of discussing potential contractual negotiations for the sale of city property at 207 Siskron St. and to discuss an economic development opportunity just presented to the city. City Council may or may not act following executive session.
Councilman Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Reed, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

5 Minute Break

Councilman Gardner made a motion to end the executive session at 8:52 pm. Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Milling, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion to end the executive session.

Councilman Gardner motion to approve the sale of property at 207 Siskron Street to be sold to bid #1 for $42,000. Councilman Milling amended the motion to add the following: along with a lease of the adjacent property for parking which would be non-inclusive and non-assignable and such other terms that Mr. Payne be authorized as the city representative to negotiate and bring back to us. Councilman Gardner seconded the amended motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Reed, Baccus, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

REMINDER
Tuesday June 7, 2022, at 6:00 PM - Regular Monthly Meeting of Darlington City Council

ADJOURN
Councilman Milling made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 PM. Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Gardner, Segars, and Mayor Boyd voted for the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor

ATTEST:

_____

Clerk & Treasurer