CITY OF DARLINGTON
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE COURTROOM/COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT
400 PEARL STREET, DARLINGTON, SC
TUESDAY JANUARY 10, 2023 - AT 6:00 PM

Present: Mayor Curtis Boyd, City Manager John Payne, Councilpersons Sheila Baccus, John Segars, John Milling, Bryant Gardner, and Howard Nettles. Councilwoman Elaine Reed arrived at 6:11 PM. Also present was Codes Enforcement Officer Ms. Sheila Jones, St. & Sanitation Superintendent Alex Gainey, Fire Chief Pat Cavanaugh, Police Chief Jimmy Davis, Ms. Jannie Lathan, City Planner Ms. Merry Morgan Smith, W&S Superintendent Mr. Charles Shugart, Recreation Director Mr. Lee Andrews, Mr. John Lewis, Ms. Gloria Hines, Mr. Mark Face, Ms. Rosa Hudson, Mr. Linwood Epps, Mr. Vondell Brockington, and other visitors.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING ON DECEMBER 6 , 2022
Councilman Howard Nettles made a motion to approve the minutes of December 6, 2022, Council Meeting. Councilman Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Baccus, Milling, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA FOR JANUARY 10, 2023
Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to approve the meeting agenda for tonight's meeting January 10, 2023. Councilman Nettles seconded the motion. Councilpersons Baccus, Milling, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

REPORT OF COMMUNITY EVENTS
Warming Shelter Activity – Mr. Mark Face gave a brief update on the shelter. He said he was contacted the Wednesday before and they were able to get some things together. Mr. Face said they had fourteen folks to visit the shelter from our community. Three of those folks stayed overnight throughout the weekend. They also served and delivered forty plus plates of food to folks in our community. Mr. Face said they also loaded them up and drove them around in a van that was donated to them for the weekend by Patriot Chevrolet as well as a donation. They had a couple of cash donations; one from Purple Fish and from two sororities here in town (he said he couldn't remember who they were). Mr. Face said they had twenty-nine volunteers throughout the weekend that actually manned the center. They had four shifts per evening, a total of twelve total shifts and twenty-nine volunteers came and worked those shifts. They had two different food trucks that came and fed the folks. They also had donations for breakfast and supper on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning. The food trucks covered Friday night and Christmas Eve. Mr. Face said because of those folks in our community and outside our community, donated several different items whether it be blankets, snacks or drinks; they were very kind. We had people from Hartsville and Florence that did this plus some folks in our own community. The National Guard donated twenty-five cots and blankets and they are still there. Mr. Face said he asked them if we could hold on to them just in case and they were gracious

enough to allow us to do so. Mr. Face said that's pretty much all he had on the shelter but he wanted to touch a little bit on…he said I'm a member of the Community Connections Darlington which is a group of churches and organizations. He said they total twelve but as a result of the warming shelter they have added five more to their group so they're up to seventeen groups that do a weekly rotation for breakfast at the City Sanitation Building. Mr. Face said, "We have a building that's been donated to us there at the corner….and they call it Crazy Hope Community Center. Mr. Face said, "there's been a misconception, some folks have been coming saying we're having a homeless shelter…we're building a homeless shelter there. And I just want to make it clear to council that if there's any of that misconception, we are not intending to make that homeless shelter at all. It's going to be a community center. It's going to be a place, an epic center for us to help folks to identify a need and to elevate them and to transform them all the while having Jesus Christ at the center of this ministry. They will be holding community events, health fairs, whatever we can to help those in our community that need the help to become productive citizens in Darlington.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Mr. Lee Andrews – Recreation Department said there's a lot going on at the rec department. He said they officially started games last night. Starting January 25th, they will be starting "free play". Mr. Andrews said they call it "free play" but it's really an open gym and there will be a charge for that. It will run every Wednesday night from 7:00pm-9:00pm at Harmon Baldwin Gym. They have senior activities going on right now. They have the ORAS which is the Optimistic, Radiant, Active Seniors. He said they come in and walk, and they take them out to lunch if they meet a goal. He said right now, they have moved it from monthly to quarterly-it's 1,198 laps around the gym and if you meet that in a quarter, they will take them out to eat.(1,198 laps comes to 30 miles for three months) Mr. Andrews said the weight room is open every day; ping pong every Tuesday through Friday; they have a quilting group that comes in every Wednesday from 9:30am-12:00. Hip hop exercise class is every Wednesday 7:00-8:00 and Saturday from 9:00-10:00 at A.W. Stanley Gym. They have dog training and those classes vary-Tuesday 6:00-8:00; Sunday 12:30-2:30. They are starting some trips back up now and it's not just seniors, but any adult that interested in doing that. They are in the process of hiring a new Program Director for the County, so they look to get more activities going as they get that person in.

Fire Chief Pat Cavanaugh – Fire Department said, "Our biggest thing is we passed the holiday season. We passed Thanksgiving and we've passed Christmas and no one burnt their house down cooking a turkey or no one has burnt their house down with a Christmas tree". Chief Cavanaugh said, "We've had a good season so far; no major injuries, no major fires, no one's hurt". Chief Cavanaugh said one of his good positives is their Christmas toy drive. He said they normally start with the "Taste of Christmas" in November. He said they raised enough money this year to help 102 children. He said it's all because of you folks, the community coming out and backing us up. Chief Cavanaugh said, "As far as everything else in the fire department, it's running like a top".

Police Chief Jimmy Davis – Police Department said since our last meeting we got a new police chief and things are starting to settle down a little bit in the transition. Chief Davis said, "we're starting to build up a little speed on doing things; officers are continuing to check

business property. From time to time, we've found squatters and unsecured doors at two businesses. The squatters have been arrested for trespassing and once we contacted the businesses about their doors, they will come down and lock them. He said officers are beginning to increase their activity in the community as well as efforts to enforce traffic safety laws and with increased traffic stops and citations. We have had at least three certified officers to show interest in returning to work at Darlington Police Department only to at the last-minute go work at another agency. He said we are still experiencing thefts from and of motor vehicles with over 90% of them being unlocked. Chief Davis urged them to please tell everybody to remove valuables from their vehicles when unattended and lock them when unattended. Chief Davis said the new state required policies have been put in place and the new policy manual is almost ready for city officials to look over and approve. Councilman John Milling said, "I noticed going to get groceries the other morning that the flashing lights on S. Main going out had since not up there anymore". Chief Davis said, "We had a minor traffic collision here with the overhanging wires and it pulled the lights down. The highway Department has been notified, they put up a new box they just haven't installed the lights yet. Chief Davis said, "We're enforcing traffic coming into town with the speed limits and the best we can do going out of town is show them that we're driving 25mph so they should drive 25mph too. Councilman Nettles asked, "Jimmy what do you attribute the three officers going somewhere else to? Is it pay? Do you know… did they give you…..Chief Davis said, "They did not. I could guess but I don't want to guess."

W&S Director Charles Shugart – W&S Department said they had four grants that we have been awarded for Wards 1 & 2 that total $5.265 million dollars. The first is $1,780,000 project that Mr. Frank Horne is completing now. Allen Street Pump Station Renovation/ Farm Street and S. Main Street Gravity Sewer replacement project. It's $1,735,000 project and the construction contract was awarded to Sam Evans Pavement. He was to begin November 30th but he came back and asked us for a 30-day extension on that. His folks are on site. His contractor and sub-contractor have been mobilized. They have identified a high security and low security storage site that we have help them acquire. All the metal for pipes and some other components has been approved and we should start seeing them doing some work. The Old Florence Gravity Sewer Allen Street Force Main replacement project. Mr. Shugart said this is the one that got approved, not this past Labor Day but the Labor Day before. It is a $500,000 project. Mr. Shugart said, "We have two projects with Allen Street in them and it gets kind of confusing with the two. This is a smaller project where we will eliminate the pump station at Bowen Manor and install some force main on Allen Street to complete the other Allen Street project that we have. Mr. Shugart said the last grant he will talk about is the SCIIP Grant that we have applied for with RIA (Rural Infrastructure Authority). This is an $11 million dollar grant ($10 million in grant funds and $1 million of our ARP funds) It consists of eight projects – 1) stormwater 2) water distribution; 3) two wastewater treatment projects in that package along with four sewer collection projects. Mr. Shugart said we should know, and we are anxiously anticipating their notification of our award for particular grant by the end of the month. Councilwoman Baccus said, "My question is, it has nothing to do with those grants. What are we doing about that manhole or big hole that's coming in the middle of Third or Avenue E"? Mr. Shugart said, "We dug up the other side some months ago and cap that with fill and we plan to

do the same project to the side now that's open up. That was a repair to a prior repair that prior administration had made and we're going to have to go back and repair it again". Councilwoman Baccus asked, "So what time frame are we talking"? Mr. Shugart said, "Oh I don't know. In the next two weeks I would hope Ms. Baccus". Councilwoman Baccus said, "Ok. Next two weeks." Mr. Shugart said, "I would hope so." Councilman Milling said, "I have one small question. I have noticed when I come down East Broad Street going toward Hardee's that there is water on the right hand side that seems to be standing just kind of like maybe it percolates whether it wet or dry, rain or no rain. At the corner of S. Ervin Street & E. Broad". Mr. Shugart said, "That's correct. We've made some…It dries up from time to time there and whenever it's wet, it's wet. We dug over there a couple of times. We're going to end up having to dig out that intersection. We're going to spend $3.5 million dollars on a stormwater project over there and we can't decide if we're going to go down the middle of the road tearing that up or if we're going to go over by the railroad. If we go down the middle of the road we're going to make that a one ditch with maybe two or three projects and hopefully I can put in a new waterline in that corner and eliminate. He said we made two repairs there and we've done two exploratory digs there. Both of the repairs were repairs that were repeats from repairs that were made prior and at this point I would like to just replace the whole corner rather than making any more repairs. Mr. Shugart said, "It doesn't seem to be a danger to people property yet but it is wet and damp and inconvenient but it's all contained over there and it's not a high priority". Councilwoman Reed asked about Washington Street at the railroad track. She asked, "What is the solution, and did we find out what that is"? Mr. Shugart said, "We made an attempt to repair that. He said we were supposed to have a hydro-excavation over there today and the folks weren't able to come". Mr. Shugart said I'm not sure when he has rescheduled to come back and do that hydro-excavation, but we've got it in the works. Councilwoman Reed said, "I just want to make sure, So what you're repairing is what? A leak or something else? Mr. Shugart said it's a leak on an old, old service line that connected that one house that crosses the road. Back years ago, when they made those they didn't put the valves on them so it's not one we can turn off we have to fix it under pressure. We've got it to the point now where it's not leaking like it was. I think it does still leak some and we're going to repair it, it's just a matter of scheduling that hydro-excavation. Councilwoman Baccus said, "Over on the corner of Pine & Jessamine, did you all fix a water leak in that area over there"? Mr. Shugart said, "I'm not sure Ms. Baccus, I'll have to look through my notes. I'll have to go back through the work orders to see". Councilwoman Baccus said, "If you did, then go back and check it because on the left side of Pine Street…the lady called…the citizen called me and right in front of her house-she said you all came out and did something and there's a hole this big in front of her driveway that needs dirt or rocks". Mr. Shugart said he will take a look at it.

Street & Sanitation Supt. - Alex Gainey – St. & Sanitation Department said over the last four to five months one of our biggest complaints and concerns has been yard debris. We lost one of our CDL drivers. We were down to one truck trying to keep up and periodically we would have Kendrick on the second truck trying to help get caught up. Mr. Gainey said, "We had approved overtime for the driver to be able to work it but with the amount of debris that was being put outside the road during this time of year (during the fall and holidays) and being short a driver, we got behind, but I'm proud to say we have hired another CDL driver and he's in the process of

being trained". Mr. Gainey said his department took down all of the Christmas ornaments on the Square, the lights on the main streets and they took the Christmas tree down this past Sunday. He said they still have one vacancy in the department for a CDL and three vacancies for laborers. Councilman Milling said, "Alex when you are out…last time I went behind Chianti's, the green waste container, it sits behind Chianti's but it was in the lane that people would use coming out of parking lot onto Russell Street. Mr. Gainey said, "I saw that today and I sent an email or text message to Capital Waste. He said the driver is the one that moved it out there. He said it use to be turned in the opposite direction, but they will try to get that addressed. Councilwoman Reed said, "Just listening to Charles he mentioned two or three things that has to do with storm water. Are you involved in that"? Mr. Gainey said, "Yes. We submitted the information for the grant to do the stormwater project at Hardees". Mr. Gainey said, "My plans, if we can get the right-of-way or the easements, from the railroad is to go down the railroad track and not go down Broad Street. We've done dug Broad Street up one time, we don't want to dig it up again".

Building & Codes Enforcement – Ms. Sheila Jones said as of December permits, fees, and different things they have collected brought them to $51,801. They currently have four single family houses under construction and 1 duplex. Permits have been pulled for three additional single-family houses to be built. Ms. Jones said Dixie Phase 2 project is about to be CO'd in the next couple of weeks so they will be completely done. Genesis is still ongoing, the courthouse is ongoing; Mavis Tire by Walmart is ongoing, the gas station on Timmonsville Highway is ongoing. An undisclosed coffee location on Lochend Drive is under plan review; and they are talking about another gas station coming on the opposite side of Timmonsville Highway, but we haven't received any plans for that. Ms. Jones said, "I recently started to be proactive with code enforcement. I have taken the city and sectioned it off so that we can ensure every week every street is visited by codes enforcement to check for any code violations". Councilwoman Baccus asked, "Where are we at on those houses and how are we doing the houses that we're tearing down"? Ms. Sheila Jones said, "so, we bid out that and Jeff Coleman won the bid on that and he'll be starting with the demolition of a house at 144 Bacote Street and we anticipate having all of the houses that are on the list down by the end of the fiscal year. Councilwoman Baccus asked, "And how many is that"? Ms. Jones said, "I believe nine".

Planning & Development – Ms. Merry Morgan Smith said, "I have the Municipal Association coming to Darlington to initiate board training for the Planning Commission next week". She said she has an appointment with our S.C. Forestry representative whom I invited to Darlington to talk about grants opportunities for our urban canopy and for professional services planting and additional arborist services in this Darlington's 25th year as Tree City USA. Ms. Smith said she was also happy to lend a hand with the City's collaborative warming shelter. Ms. Smith said, "I'm going to spend the rest of my time asking you for your assistance with an application I'm drafting. She said it's urgent, but the reward is great. Late last week a friend from the low country forwarded me this opportunity as I was unaware of it's existence. Ms. Smith said the application is for the S.C. Rural Summit's Inaugural 2023 S.C. Great Community Competition, but it's due Friday. She said Darlington qualifies to apply for this as Darlington County is a designated Tier 3, Tier 4 County and we have a population under 7,000 so qualify to apply. Ms.

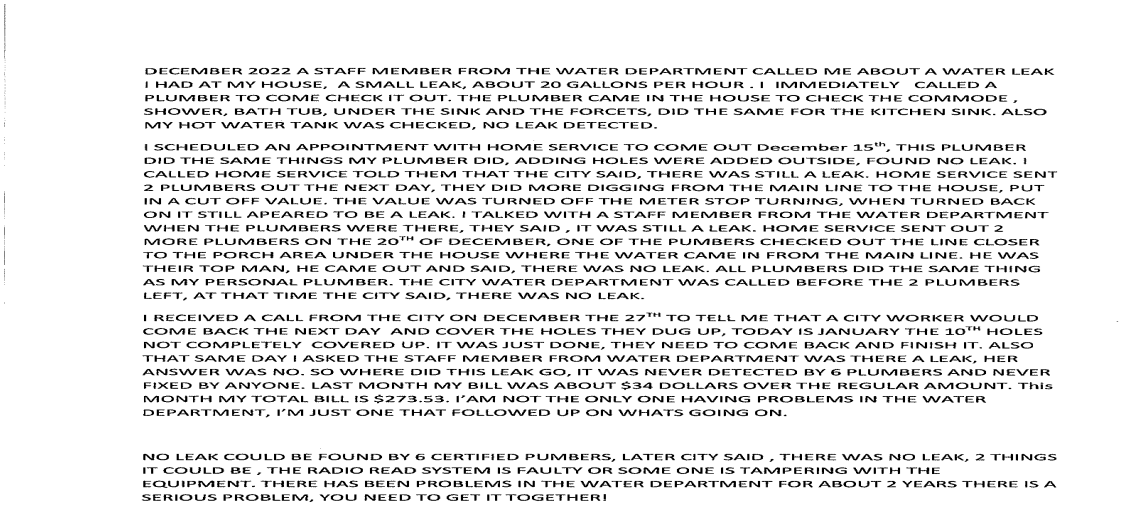
Smith said it is an actual competition for funding and there will only be three city finals. The three communities chosen for this competition will be announced in just two weeks on January 28th. A case study of a successfully completed community project was impactful, responsive, inclusive, collaborative and sustainable is the basis of the competition. The recently completed AfriCOBRA Darlington engage and embrace project meets all of these judging criteria; however, the submission on Friday must also show community support for the application by providing letters of support to send with the completed application. Ms. Smith said, “I compiled a list of our partners in this effort and the criteria that the competition is requesting and I have posted those on the website this afternoon with ATG’s help. While we’re limited only to three pages of the narrative for actual submission itself, there is no limit to the number of supporting materials that can be provided, so I would ask that you yourselves would be willing to supply letters of support and if you would be willing to ask one or two others to also do that because quality and quantity is important. She said she’s happy to pick up letters and they can be emailed to her. Ms. Godbold at Dedicated Community Bank said she would also accept her office for people that need to drop off. She said the communities that will be chosen in the next two weeks will be required to deliver a presentation at the Summit and the winning cities will actually be chosen by the participants that are at the Summit at that time. Ms. Smith told council she has handouts for them after the meeting with all of the details. Councilman Milling asked Ms. Smith if she has formats for letters of support. Ms. Smith said she didn’t have any draft letters, but she would be happy to help anybody that would benefit from that. Councilman Nettles said, “You’ve told us the who, the what and the why. What’s the end result if you won”. Ms. Smith said, “the end result is if you are one of the three cities that are chosen the city that comes in first will get $100,000 and the other two will get $50,000 so if you’re chosen at all you would end up with $50,000. She said there is no match, but it can be used for a match. Councilwoman Baccus, “I had a couple of citizens I spoke to in different areas mainly Farm Street and we were discussing issues that there’re having at their home and they were asking is there a program or anything that the city can do to help them with sewage problems at their home. So, is there any kind of program that this council has or any kind of loan program that we have that we do anything to help those citizens”? Councilman Nettles asked, “Are you talking about like plumbing, sewage problems or….Councilwoman Baccus said, “Sewage problems backing up in their house or whatever”. Councilman Nettles said, “So, basically from inside the house part of it”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “Yeah, but it’s backing up because the council…because the city is sewage problems. Do the City have a loan program that we can help those citizens”? Mr. Payne said, “The city itself does not have a loan program. Ms. Merry Morgan said, “The flyer I just handed you that’s for long time recovery so for people that own their own homes that those issues they are willing to help. I think Ms. Deidre Odom is on the list and Ms. Bishop is on there too and they recently came to town to offer to help and so your homeowners can reach out to them”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “Yeah, I know about that program”. Councilwoman Baccus said, “That’s not what I’m asking. Councilwoman Reed said, “We have had several applications for long term disaster recovery which ever one Ms. Bishop is a part of and so many of those applications are still pending. That’s why you’re hearing this apprehension when people are needing immediate care. We are trying to find whatever program that immediately come in and kind of give people relief when there’s a disaster”. Councilwoman Reed said, “I don’t know what to say there. What I get when I’m dealing with the State agencies is that their funding went out

on one and they're borrowing money from another to keep this going and they are prioritizing this application from there to there, but in a situation like she's calling, I don't know. She said we are really looking and if we do know if anybody that or some entity that can come with immediate help….Councilwoman Baccus said, "So you're saying the council can't help a citizen". Mr. Payne said, "No, I'm not saying that. I'm saying we don't have an apparatus established to do that at this time". Councilwoman Baccus said, "So, we don't lend money to citizens to help them with issues like this". Mr. Payne said, "No." Councilwoman Baccus said, "Really. I think we do." Mr. Payne said, "I've never dealt with anything like that in the city." Councilwoman Baccus said, "Nettles, Milling I want you to read that. I want you to read this and tell me we don't do that". (Councilwoman Baccus was passing out copies of an invoice and Mayor Boyd was trying to continue with the agenda items)

CITIZENS WISHING TO APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL (5 MINUTES PER PERSON, 30 TOTAL MINUTES MAXIMUM)

***Neither personal attacks nor disruptive behavior are permitted**

Ms. Gloria Hines said appeared before council to discuss an issue concerning the water department (copy of her letter attached below)



DECEMBER 2022 A STAFF MEMBER FROM THE WATER DEPARTMENT CALLED ME ABOUT A WATER LEAK I HAD AT MY HOUSE, A SMALL LEAK, ABOUT 20 GALLONS PER HOUR . I IMMEDIATELY CALLED A PLUMBER TO COME CHECK IT OUT. THE PLUMBER CAME IN THE HOUSE TO CHECK THE COMMODE , SHOWER, BATH TUB, UNDER THE SINK AND THE FORCETS, DID THE SAME FOR THE KITCHEN SINK. ALSO MY HOT WATER TANK WAS CHECKED, NO LEAK DETECTED.

I SCHEDULED AN APPOINTMENT WITH HOME SERVICE TO COME OUT December 15th, THIS PLUMBER DID THE SAME THINGS MY PLUMBER DID, ADDING HOLES WERE ADDED OUTSIDE, FOUND NO LEAK. I CALLED HOME SERVICE TOLD THEM THAT THE CITY SAID, THERE WAS STILL A LEAK. HOME SERVICE SENT 2 PLUMBERS OUT THE NEXT DAY, THEY DID MORE DIGGING FROM THE MAIN LINE TO THE HOUSE, PUT IN A CUT OFF VALUE. THE VALUE WAS TURNED OFF THE METER STOP TURNING, WHEN TURNED BACK ON IT STILL APEARED TO BE A LEAK. I TALKED WITH A STAFF MEMBER FROM THE WATER DEPARTMENT WHEN THE PLUMBERS WERE THERE, THEY SAID , IT WAS STILL A LEAK. HOME SERVICE SENT OUT 2 MORE PLUMBERS ON THE 20TH OF DECEMBER, ONE OF THE PUMBERS CHECKED OUT THE LINE CLOSER TO THE PORCH AREA UNDER THE HOUSE WHERE THE WATER CAME IN FROM THE MAIN LINE. HE WAS THEIR TOP MAN, HE CAME OUT AND SAID, THERE WAS NO LEAK. ALL PLUMBERS DID THE SAME THING AS MY PERSONAL PLUMBER. THE CITY WATER DEPARTMENT WAS CALLED BEFORE THE 2 PLUMBERS LEFT, AT THAT TIME THE CITY SAID, THERE WAS NO LEAK.

I RECEIVED A CALL FROM THE CITY ON DECEMBER THE 27TH TO TELL ME THAT A CITY WORKER WOULD COME BACK THE NEXT DAY AND COVER THE HOLES THEY DUG UP, TODAY IS JANUARY THE 10TH HOLES NOT COMPLETELY COVERED UP. IT WAS JUST DONE, THEY NEED TO COME BACK AND FINISH IT. ALSO THAT SAME DAY I ASKED THE STAFF MEMBER FROM WATER DEPARTMENT WAS THERE A LEAK, HER ANSWER WAS NO. SO WHERE DID THIS LEAK GO, IT WAS NEVER DETECTED BY 6 PLUMBERS AND NEVER FIXED BY ANYONE. LAST MONTH MY BILL WAS ABOUT $34 DOLLARS OVER THE REGULAR AMOUNT. This MONTH MY TOTAL BILL IS $273.53. I'AM NOT THE ONLY ONE HAVING PROBLEMS IN THE WATER DEPARTMENT, I'M JUST ONE THAT FOLLOWED UP ON WHATS GOING ON.

NO LEAK COULD BE FOUND BY 6 CERTIFIED PUMBERS, LATER CITY SAID , THERE WAS NO LEAK, 2 THINGS IT COULD BE , THE RADIO READ SYSTEM IS FAULTY OR SOME ONE IS TAMPERING WITH THE EQUIPMENT. THERE HAS BEEN PROBLEMS IN THE WATER DEPARTMENT FOR ABOUT 2 YEARS THERE IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM, YOU NEED TO GET IT TOGETHER!

Councilwoman Baccus said, "I have one more question Curtis". Mayor Boyd told Mr. Lewis to go ahead and speak.

Mr. John Lewis said first off I would like to congratulate Chief Davis for the job. I think it's well deserved. Mr. Lewis said, "Unfortunately I was unable to attend December's council's meeting, so I want to refer back to the November meeting where my name and another citizen's name was brought up by a council member. Councilman Nettles said, "Me. Just for the record in case anybody asks questions". Mr. Lewis said, "When I tried to respond, Mr. Mayor, you told me I had already had my time to speak. If my name is brought up I deserve the right to speak up and

defend whatever has been said. So, in the past it was said that we could not call out a city council member by name. If that's the case, don't call out my name and I'm not just referring to you sir (looking at Councilman Nettles). It's anybody in this council. What's going to be one way, has to be two ways. Mr. Lewis said, "I look at this agenda…totally different than what we use to have. I like this format. I like with the department heads coming up and speaking, but there's a comment on here that says neither personal attacks or disruptive behavior are permitted. Mr. Lewis said I wasn't going to bring this issue up until I was told last week I couldn't…the November meeting that I could speak up. If you recall Mr. Mayor, quite a while back, I was up here speaking; you stood up, you called me a whiner because I was in here bringing up issues that had not been resolved. At that time you said this is my meeting, this is my room, this is my city council. All I've got to say in response to that is all of this belongs to the citizens of Darlington; this council meeting, this room, everyone…you represent us. Mr. Lewis said, "Now I will say Mr. Mayor, (not the following month but the month after that) you and I had a private discussion out here and you apologized to me which I accepted. And like I said, I was not going to bring that up until this. Mr. Lewis said, "If I'm going to be attacked and it was on Facebook, I deserve an apology on Facebook. So, Mr. Mayor that's up to you. You made that apology once, it was in private, but you attacked me in public, so I believe I deserve an apology and once I receive that apology it will be over with. Mayor Boyd said, "Mr. Lewis if I ever offended you I'm always than tell you I'm sorry". Mr. Lewis said, "Done. I'm done with that. That's fine. I just want to make sure that we understand that if you bring up my name I am going to respond whether anyone likes it or not. If I have to be asked to leave the meeting, then so be it, but do not bring up my name and tell me that I cannot respond. Thank you.

Councilwoman Baccus said, "No I want to make a comment". Mayor Boyd said, "We're going to stay on the agenda please". Councilwoman Baccus said, "My comment is going to be this memo shows that this council loaned your money citizens to the public. (Mayor Boyd hit the gavel to bring order) Councilwoman Baccus said, "it's illegal for council to lend money. And four members on this council agreed to lend your money to the public and you need to know that. Mayor Boyd continued with the agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

a)Public Hearing for Zoning Designation for Ordinance 2022-12, Annexation of Lochend Drive. Ms. Sheila Jones said we didn't receive any correspondence from citizens in regard to the public meeting and nobody has to come to city council meeting for a response to that.

b)2nd Reading Ordinance 2022-12, Zoning Designation for Ordinance 2022-12 – Sheila Jones, Codes Enforcement – Ms. Jones said Lochend Drive was temporarily designated as General Commercial (GC) until we had this meeting today. **Councilman John Milling made a motion to approve Second Reading of ordinance 2022-12 Zoning designation of Lochend Drive as a General Commercial (GC) zoning district. Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Gardner, Segars and Mayor Boyd all approved the motion.**

c) 2nd Reading Ordinance 2022-13 Change Pylon Sign Maximum Height – Sheila Jones, Codes Enforcement – Ms. Jones said the free-standing principal signs in general commercial are allowed to be forty feet (40') on the By-Pass and everywhere else it has to be twenty-four feet (24'). Ms. Jones said she is coming before council for the second reading to finalize allowing south of the By-Pass to also be forty feet (40'). She said everything else will still remain twenty-four feet (24') inside east of the By-Pass and north of S. Main Street so as we grow into Florence it will be forty feet (40"). Councilwoman Reed asked, "What's you're saying is on the By-Pass"? Ms. Jones said, "On the By-Pass, it's already allowed forty feet (40'). That's already an ordinance so now we're just saying south of the By-Pass on S. Main Street will also be forty feet (40'). Councilwoman Nettles asked, "Like Tractor Supply"? Ms. Jones said, "Like Tractor Supply, that way. Nothing encroaching this way." Councilwoman Baccus asked, "Out to how far, Bojangles"? Ms. Jones said, "yes and hopefully we're annex more in". Councilman Milling asked, "Just out of curiosity, will McDonald's and existing people be able to raise…..Ms. Jones interrupted and said, "I believe McDonald's is already forty feet (40'). Councilman Milling said, "so others that have twenty four (24') based on the old ordinance can now come up to forty (40'). Ms. Jones said, "Yes." **Councilman John Milling made a motion to approve Second Reading on Ordinance 2022-13 amending the maximum sign heights Table 6H be amended so that it is provided that signs on the By-Pass as well as those South of the By-Pass headed toward Florence will be allowed to be forty feet (40') in height, twenty-four feet (24') when located elsewhere. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Reed, Baccus, Segars and Mayor Boyd all voted in favor of the motion.**

NEW BUSINESS

a)1st Reading Ordinance 2023-01, Change Minimum Lot widths in R6, Sheila Jones, Codes Enforcement – Ms. Sheila Jones said, "Farm, Allen, Guest, Bacote Streets and also areas on Vaughan Street have lots that are fifty feet (50') wide and the blocks are blocks are fifty feet (50') wide that have houses on it. *(Councilman Nettles told Ms. Jones to hang on a second because other conversations are going on) Ms. Jannie Lathan said, "I'm sorry, I'll be quiet, but I'm just concerned that there was no public hearing held on the ordinance that you just passed, and it's required by law".* Mayor Boyd said, "Thank you. Ms. Jones." Ms. Jones said, "So, right now they are fifty feet (50')and we have blocks of it. All of Guest Street is fifty feet, Allen Street is fifty feet; there's many lots that are fifty feet on Bacote Street. Vaughan Street, Woods Street and so our ordinance says that in R6 a minimum lot width to build is sixty feet (60') so if somebody has a house and it's……we have condemned property, we're having houses torn down; we're doing it, homeowners and investors are purchasing property tearing houses down, they can't rebuild on it because our minimum lot width is sixty feet (60') so we're asking to change that minimum lot width from sixty feet (60') to fifty feet (50') but only in previously and existing parcels of land that have been surveyed and recorded with Darlington County. Ms. Jones said, "And we're doing that because if someone has, say an acre of land in R6 and they want to divide it, then it has to be sixty feet (60'). She said, but anything already existing, anything that's already surveyed and already recorded with Darlington County to change that to fifty feet (50'). So, she changed 2.3 Table (under R6) Ms. Jones said under parenthetical (i) says existing and previously surveyed lots recorded in Darlington County and

within the city's jurisdiction with a street frontage measuring fifty linear feet (50') is permitted. All newly surveyed and divided parcels of land must have a minimum width of sixty feet (60'). Mayor Boyd asked, "Will that affect the size of the house? Can they still build the same size house previously on sixty foot"? Ms. Jones said, "No, because then you have to live within the setbacks but there are houses out there….we had a builder get a variance because there are houses that you can get that will live within that fifty foot (50') and still meet the setback requirements on the sides, rear, and front". Councilwoman Reed asked, "What's a setback"? Ms. Jones said, "In order for you to build anything you have setbacks and it says where the buildable area is. You can't build so close to property lines. In residential areas you have to come off the property line 8' in R-6 off the sides and rear. In R-10 is either 10' or 15'; you can't build any closer than that so that you can have yard and not so close to other people's houses after the houses are built". Councilwoman Baccus said, "So those houses on Columbian Street do they meet that ordinance"? Ms. Jones said, "That was one lot and they were under a different rule for that because you can have patio homes and if the lot is large enough you have to have 6,000 square feet for a single family house and 4,000 square feet for each additional house and then you have to meet density ratios and they met all of those ratios for the ones that were just built. I can't speak about the ones that were built before, but the ones that were just built meet the density ratio and meet the size of the lot with the number of houses and the square footage that its using. Mayor Boyd asked, "How wide are those houses apart"? Ms. Jones said I can't remember off the top of my head"? Mr. Alex Gainey said, "They are twenty-four feet (24') wide". Mayor Boyd said, "If I'm doing the math…if a 60' yard is now down to 50' and you still have to have 8' off to the side that puts it where you could build a 34' house. And you're saying those houses over there are twenty-four (24') so you still have plenty of room to build that size house or bigger. Councilman Nettles said, "But if you don't do it then we're kind of crippling the property owner. Ms. Jones said, "We're affecting economic development and that's why we left it specific to existing lots and not new lots". Mr. Alex Gainey said, "Now you're saying that the ordinance that you're proposing as long as it's a preexisting lot that the house is recorded and has a recorded plat. My question is, I've got a lot on Edwards Avenue that I can't build on because we don't have a recorded plat for it and I can't get a surveyor to be able to survey it out, so what are you going to do in that situation"? Ms. Jones said, "But it is a lot. It's already a lot. I'm saying if you have an acre of land and you want to divide it out, we're not dividing fifty feet (50'), we're dividing it to sixty (60'). Councilwoman Reed said , "You know where I am and the house beside me… beside that house…all those are empty now; what can be built on that because I know the lot is too small". Ms. Jones said, "I would have to look at it. I don't know how wide it is. It is very possible that's one of those fifty-foot (50') lots. Mayor Boyd asked, "There's a lot on Limit Street there's a lot that's narrow and it goes all the way to the other side, and I just assume it's fifty foot wide (50') wide that you could build on. Will the landowner be able to divide it in half and put one on this side and one on that side. Could they put one on this street and one on that street and divide it midway"? Ms. Jones said, "No, they could build one house on it". **Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-01 Change Minimum Widths in R-6 from sixty feet (60') to fifty feet (50'). Councilman Howard Nettles seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, Baccus, Reed, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.**

b) Purchase Order Approval – Maintenance on Customer Service Software, Charles Shugart, Water & Sewer Director – Mr. Shugart told council he was there to ask approval for a purchase order for Sensus for our warranty and maintenance coverage from Ferguson Waterworks on our meter reading equipment. This is an annual expense the city has had since installing the Sensus product. Mr. Shugart said you all probably didn't know about this before because it wasn't $5,000. In 2020 it was $4,800; last year it was $4,949 and this year it's $5,110. Councilwoman Reed said, "You said it's a sensor that does what"? Mr. Shugart said, "Sensus is the name brand that the city chose years ago as water meters. This is the warranty and maintenance product that we have to purchase every year that allows us to run from the office the customer service to do the billing of the water bills monthly. It also allows us to look at the water meters while we're in the office and do other customer service work. Councilwoman Reed asked, "Is this the equipment or the tool by which people are talking about now….they got the bills wrong." Mr. Shugart said, "It's the office software for the utility billing". Councilwoman Reed said, "I'm just trying to see how it's connected because you hear what we hear. You hear what we're hearing….it's detecting or it don't detect…The billing is off because this is that". Mr. Shugart said the Sensus equipment was installed, from what I understand, twelve years ago and then there was some installed fourteen years ago. That equipment is due for a battery replacement but when batteries wear out it stops working and currently we are reading by hand about 150 water meters because they are out and we can't purchase the batteries. He said nobody has them. Every once in a while we'll get 4-6. We ordered fifty (50) of them and every once in a while they will send us two or three. We got four the other day. Mr. Shugart said we need to replace actually….somewhere in the net year or so we need to sit down, and I need to see what it's going to cost us to replace all of the batteries in all of the meters." Councilwoman Reed asked, "Is there another different kind of equipment"? Mr. Shugart said, "We're already down the road with these meters. The city decided years ago to install Sensus water meters, Sensus sending equipment, Sensus receiving equipment and Sensus software. He said you all did that 12 -14 years ago or you did it twice; 14 years ago and 12 years ago. So, that's the equipment that we have. The price changing all of our water meters out and going to another system is going to be very, very expensive as compared to just replacing some batteries. Councilwoman Reed said, "So this kind of determines that". Mr. Shugart said this is something you all pay for every year. This year it happens to be more than $5,000 is the reason why I'm up here asking you for a purchase order. Councilwoman Reed said, "And by that coming to this particular council…I didn't now that was something that we were doing. But this particular council is being bombarded with problems that you seem to make me think that this particular machine monitor and it may not, I just got to get some understanding so again we are still……Mr. Shugart said, "this is the software. The Sensus equipment is the meters in the ground. It's also the sending equipment; it's the towers that receive it and sends it out to other servers that come back through our computers. It also send it to a third party billing that make the bills up, we don't do that ourselves and then this equipment I'm talking about here is the software that's located in the office that the ladies can look at your water meter and everybody else's that are on our system to see if you have a water leak, see how much your bill is. It also creates work orders, it creates leak notices…..Councilwoman Baccus said, "So if the sensor goes out, if one of sensors mess up, then the thing could mess up and send somebody an invalid bill or say they've got a leak. Mr. Shugart said, "No ma'am, this is not a sensor. The

name of the equipment is Sensus." Councilwoman Baccus said, "I'm not talking about that. You said….a few minutes ago you said you all are reading 150 meters manually because you don't have the batteries. The battery operates a sensor that it reads that sends a signal, code or whatever to the water department system and say this is what your water bill is". Mr. Shugart said, "Right. That the radio device has quit working so now we have to go out and read the meter manually". Councilwoman Baccus said, "Like Gloria for example, she had six plumbers come to her house, dig holes everywhere did everything and couldn't find no leak. Now the water department is telling her the leak stopped". Vondell Brockington said, "I can answer that because I was the person on hand. Vondell said, "Ms. Hines's problem particularly….this is how our system works. All of our meters have counters on them. They count the amount of water being used for the home. It does not count the amount of water that the city has out in the street. Anything that goes through the meter to the home is what the meter counts. A constant flow alert was given through the meter. Vondell said we had an idea that the meter could be a problem so we switched it out. Once we put the brand-new meter in it continued to still run. So, the only way that we can determine the meter (because the meter talk to us); we have a device, and it will tell us whatever problem the meter is having. If the meter stops communicating with the devices the alert will tell us that the meter is not communicating. If a continuous water flow is detected then the meter will tell us that info and then you can look on the Sensus and it will tell you how much". Vondell said, "Her particular problem was her water meter was running. We got to the address and tried to address the problem to see if it was on our side. That means that the leak is inside the box where we can detect it. He said there was no leak at that time. The amount of water that was coming was coming was a constant flow and if there had been one it would have risen up out enough to be seen. The water would have been seen inside the box. Vondell said, "Long story short, we changed the meter out. The new meter that we put in was doing the same thing which lets us know that the problem isn't on our side. It is on the customer side because the meter is only detecting the water that goes through the meter from the city to the customer's house. Vondell said he spoke with Ms. Hines about it, and she said the plumbers came, they looked at everything. He said we're only responsible for the meter from the road on the outside and if a leak is detected on our side we can pretty much see where the water is coming from". Councilwoman Baccus said, "Ok, my question is this, now they're saying there is no leak when she checked back with ya'll; did the leak fix itself"? Vondell said, "No, she had several people to do work at her house to stop the leak". Councilwoman Baccus said, "She didn't have no plumber do no work because I asked her about that". Ms. Hines said, "Wait a minute Vondell ain't nobody fix no leak now; don't tell that lie. There was no cutoff valve so the plumber installed one so he could tell if the leak was under the house or coming from the main line to the house. When he cut it off, the meter was not turning. But when he cut it back on the meter was turning so that means the leak was under the house, but when I called the city back again (I've got record of it) they said there was no leak. The last plumber that came out went under the house, he came close to the front porch where the water was coming up from the main line and found no leak. He came back out; I called the city - no leak. And then after they said no leak the plumber left. Then on the 27th Charlotte called back to tell me that you or whoever was coming out to cover up the hole and I asked her if there was still a leak and she said "no". Ok, so who fixed the leak. No plumber fixed the leak Vondell. You can't justify that. I know what you're saying about the meter; the meter was turning. If you all said I had a leak, and

the leak was not fixed what happened"? Councilman Milling asked, "Ms. Hines can I just beg that you and the water department address this outside of the city council meeting because I can't solve the issue here and I am sorry that you are having that problem, but Mr. Shugart just asked about $5,100 so he can sign off on the software system. Ms. Hines said, "Again, like Mr. John said they called his name, and he addressed it. He (Vondell) got up there and started talking about me, so I was going to address it. Councilman Milling said, "And I understand where you are, but I'm just saying at this point I don't see how we can solve the question of where the leak went while we're trying to deal with the issue of do we pay $5,100 to approve the software system for the next operating year and do we need to look at….everybody's going to have a software system and there's going to be an annual charge for every software system. Is there a better software system than we've got and if there is, what are we going to have to anticipate is going to be the"….Mr. Shugart interrupted and said, "As far as I know, this is the only one compatible with our equipment. This is the one from them and this is the one you all decided on 12 to 14 years ago. **Councilman John Milling made a motion to approve $5,110 for the software system for the next operating year. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Reed, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.**

Executive session
Pursuant to SC Code of Laws 30-4-40 (5) for proposed contractual arrangements incidental to a proposed purchase of property. Council may or may not act following the executive session.

Councilman John Milling made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:14 PM. Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Gardner, Baccus, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

5 Minute Break

Councilman Nettles made a motion to end the Executive Session at 7:40 PM. Councilman Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Reed, Baccus, Milling, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

Back In Session

Reminder
Tuesday February 7, 2023 - Regular Meeting of Darlington City Council, 6:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT
Councilman Gardner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 pm. Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Nettles, Baccus, Milling, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the adjournment.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk & Treasurer