CITY OF DARLINGTON
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE COURTROOM/COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT
400 PEARL STREET, DARLINGTON, SC
TUESDAY DECEMBER 3, 2024, AT 6:00 PM

Present: Mayor Curtis Boyd, Councilpersons Shelia Baccus, Angela McRavin, Bryant Gardner, Elaine Reed, John Milling and John Segars. Also, present were Gloria Pridgen, Interim City Manager, Celeste Dubose and Hunter Thomas.

Mr. Steven Drew with the News & Press and Shawnia Butler with WPDE news were present.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mayor Boyd.

Mayor Boyd did the invocation which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES SEPTEMBER 3, 2024: NOVEMBER 12, 2024 & NOVEMBER 19, 2024

Councilwoman Elaine Reed made a motion to approve the minutes from our regular council meeting on September 3, 2024. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, McRavin, Baccus, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

Councilwoman Angela McRavin said for the November 12, 2024 minutes I would like to respectfully request that there are a couple of things; a few corrections that need to be made and that we hold off on approving the minutes. Councilman John Milling asked did she have some proposed amendments? Councilwoman McRavin said yes there were a couple of things that were incorrect. She said this is wonderful for posting online to give people a synopsis. Councilwoman Angela McRavin said that there a few things were missing and some needed to be added. She said I do have some amendments and changes to that, just so they can update it. Councilwoman McRavin said If that's okay. I suggest we hold off on approval until next meeting for the updates made on these minutes. Councilman John Milling said could you send us an email or something alerting us as to the changes so we can take a look at them for review before the next meeting. Councilwoman McRavin said that she would do that.

Councilwoman McRavin said that there are corrections that need to be made for the November 19, 2024 Work Session. Mayor Boyd said we will hold off on approving those minutes too.

CITIZENS WISHING TO APPEAR

Mr. ALBERT JAMES

Mr. James thanked council for what they do. He said he was here on behalf of the City Tree Board to invite you all to our Arbor Day celebration this Friday at 11:00 AM. It will be brief because it's going to be very cold. The Mayor will be there to present the Arbor Day proclamation. Th City earned a grant through Clemson forestry service and the purpose of that is to plant trees within the city limits. Mr. James said that the private people that are doing this for us will have several people there also. Mayor Boyd asked for the location. Mr. James said the Public Square. He said we got now until the end of the year to get our trees planted. Mr. James said that they specifically wanted to invite you all to come. He said this is something we need to do in order to maintain our position as a tree city. It is very important that we get this thing done because it's going to take some work. They will have trees there Friday morning for anybody that might be interested in getting trees to plant in their yard. They would like to just simply get to know people because we have got work to do and we have got to get it done by the end of 2025. Mr. James asked if anyone had any questions about any of this. He asked did they even know this was going on.

MR. CALVIN HANKINS

After Mr. Calvin began his presentation, he was interrupted. Councilman Gardner said I am sorry sir, but we are not allowed to have personal attacks. Mr. Calvin said this is not a personal attack. Councilwoman Baccus said this is not a personal attack, it's a question. Mayor Boyd said I don't have a problem with it. Mr. Calvin continued with his presentation. Mr. Hankins said as a resident of the City of Darlington, I address the city council of Darlington in the matter of Mr. Curtis Boyd. My question to the council is Mr. Curtis Boyd a resident and elector of the City of Darlington thus qualifying him to hold the title of Mayor. Article VI and Article XVII Section 1 of the State Constitution sets the standard and establishes the qualification for one elected or is appointed to office. One key requirement is that the person must be an elector. Simply stated, an elector must be eligible to vote for the office they propose to hold. The law defines an elector as a person whose name is contained on the active roster of voters maintained by the State Election Committee. Furthermore, S.C. code of law section 5-15-26 calls for the mayor to be a qualified elector of the municipality or city that he serves. Does the council know in fact that Mr. Curits Boyd's name is on the roster of the State Election Committee demonstrating that he's an elector or registered voter whom may vote here in the City of Darlington. For that matter does the council know in fact that Curtis Boyd is a legal resident of the City of Darlington. Section 7-1-25 of the South Carolina Code of laws sets the criteria that defines residency. In pertinent part it quotes "A person's residence is his domicile. The law goes on to define domicile as a person's fixed home where he has an intention of returning when he is away. Furthermore, the law expressly states that a person only has one domicile. Does the council know in fact that Mr. Curits Boyd returns to a fixed home with a legal address in the City of Darlington where he lives and resides on a daily basis? It is my understanding of SC code section 5-7-210 that these issues of elector and residency is a primary responsibility of the city council. I vehemently contend that this matter should be thoroughly investigated. This process should be transparent. Meaning that the council should

disclose it's finding to the citizens of Darlington. If it is found that Mr. Boyd is not a legal resident of the city of Darlington, he should relinquish his title or be removed from office by any and all means necessary as mandated by S.C. code Section 5-7-210, other laws and the S.C. Constitution. Mayor Boyd said Mr. Calvin, since you address my name, I'll address you. You're welcome to leave with me tonight, if you want to sleep in my bed butt naked with me, okay. You're welcome to sleep in bed with me, Okay? Mr. Calvin said " I'm not gay, I'm not a faggot, I'm not a homosexual". Mayor Boyd said I'm not a faggot either, but you're welcome to see where I stay, okay. I'm a registered voter. I listened to you. You listen to me. Okay, I voted, I live in the city of Darlington. My residence is the city of Darlington. My driver's license is in the City of Darlington. I pay taxes on 43 cars in the city of Darlington. So, yes sir, I live in the city of Darlington. If, anytime, 24/7 /365, okay, that you would like to address me and ride with me, you are more than welcome to any time of the day. Mr. Calvin said that I may take you up on that. Mayor Boyd said have a good day.

CARPS SC PRESENTATION

Mr. Gregory Jacobs said I would like to thank you for this opportunity to make this presentation. How much time do I have? Mayor Boyd said that I have all night? My name is Gregory Jacobs. I'm the Deputy Director of CARPS SC. We call it CARPS SC, it's an acronym which stands for Community- based Alliance of Rural Peer Support Services. Our main function, goal and mission, is to improve the overall health and wellness of the citizens of the communities that we serve, specifically when it pertains to substance use disorder, opioid use disorder and preventable overdoses. We try not to call it addiction. We call it substance use disorder because addiction is a stigmatizing term. It puts the onus back on the individual, instead of it being recognized as a medical issue that is American Medical Association recognizes substance use disorder as a disease that has symptoms, it has a course of action, it has outcomes, course of treatment. But before I go on, I want to say a little bit about myself. My name is Gregory Jacobs. I was born in Baltimore, Maryland, but I've been a Darlington County residence for the last seven years. I live in Pepper Ridge. I know it's not Baltimore City, but I spend my money at Roses, Takis, Dairy Bar, Walmart. I love Mamma Mia. Vinny and I are good friends. I used to be the Behavioral Health Manager for Genesis downtown, before I formed this nonprofit with my partner. Darlington is in my blood my father, Wesley Jacobs, was a sharecropper. He is 89 years old. Sharecropper up the road in Lydia, just like his father, Louis Jacobs, like his father, Joseph Jacobs, like his father, Simon Jacobs, who was a slave. So, Darlington is in my blood. So, one of the things that we want to do, we want to target rural communities where folks may not have access to services. We don't do treatment. We do Linkage to Care. We do individual and peer support. We do Individual and family peer support services. Because sometimes when a family member is experiencing a substance use disorder, they don't know who to call, they don't know who to turn to, or sometimes they've had this crisis so many different times that they have a blind eye. So when I talk to family members, I'm also a family recovery coach, I tell them that when your family member comes to you and asks for help. If it's a 9th, 10th or 11th time, act like it's the first, because it may be the last. It's often difficult for a person with substance use disorder to ask for help. March 6, 1997, was the last day that I used heroin and cocaine, and I say that because I couldn't have done it without help from other

people. So, we try to build villages of connections, what we call recovery communities in different areas. When it comes to substance use disorder, when a person has a chemical dependency, it's not like they wake up every day and say I want to get high. From my personal experience, I woke up most days, and I am a believer. I woke up most days cursing God for waking me up again to go through what I had to go through. Even though I've been vaccinated five times, I've had COVID four times. I've had pneumonia twice. I would take all those all over again, over withdrawals. It was the worst experience I've ever felt in my life, and I felt like there was nothing I could do about it except getting high to satisfy not having that feeling, it wasn't a choice. The first time I picked it up it was a choice, but sometimes, not every individual, but some individuals who are predisposed to substance use disorders, that choice goes away. It's a medical condition. Dr. Nora Volkow from NIDA has done extensive research on it, and they have images of the brain of a person who was a cocaine addict. They took images of that person before they entered treatment. Six months after treatment started in abstinence, the brain images had barely changed. They could see where the brain was affected. So, it takes a long time. So, people say, Okay, if a person gets out, they're going to treatment. That's it. No, that's not it. So, this is where we come in. Treatment begins in the facilities. Recovery begins in the community. So what we do at CARPS SC is we provide those support services, again, for individuals, family members in Dillon, Darlington, Florence and Marion County. I'm not going to say I pick up the phone every time someone calls, because I got to sleep sometimes, but if I wake up in the middle of night and I see I missed a call, I'm going to pick it up. If there's a family member who's been affected due to the point they have to go to the hospital of suspected overdose. If I get that call at three in the morning, as soon as I can see that call, I will call a family member. I will go to where that individual is. I've gotten calls from people in the Mill Hill. I've gotten calls from people up at McDonald's and I make sure it's a safe place. I meet them there, I don't say, get yourself together. They already know something's wrong. What I ask them is, what can I do for you today? What can I do right now? Because sometimes it's not even a day-by-day process, but a step-by-step process. So, one of the things that we do is we walk side by side with the individual and with the family, and we help them decide what they want to do. Sometimes it's treatment, sometimes it's NA meeting sometimes it's AA, I've gotten people placed in treatment in Charleston, North Carolina and different places. So, we kind of act as mentors, and we work with them to try to get them into a safe place. And here's the numbers. Since January of this year, we've distributed 97 boxes of Narcan here in Darlington. Between Dillon, Florence, Marion and Darlington County we have had 1,080 civic engagements, most in the City of Darlington, and that specific number is 940 people in Darlington that have received our services in one way or another, and that's the lead because it's 940 in Darlington, 312 in Dillon, 85 in Florence and 55 in Marion. So we have the numbers, from May 22nd of this year to November 22nd of this year there were 56 total suspected overdoses. One of the things we do, we get information from the state through the ODMAP system, because the state pays us to do these services, and they send us the information where they have suspected overdoses, and our job is to go to those areas and administer these services and see who needs help. Out of those 56 suspected overdoses, these substances were involved, alcohol, fentanyl and oxycodone. Out of those overdoses, 38 of those times Narcan was

used. One of the other things that we did was harm reduction. If a person does have a suspected overdose, we try to make sure that they get what we call the fentanyl test strips and xylazine test strips. Again, the state pays for us to minister these items. A lot of people don't know what xylazine is. Xylazine is a tranquilized issue on horses, deer and elks. People are putting in the drug system. So, it's being seen. I've talked to different treatment providers in this county and other counties, because I see this being detected in folks blood streams. So, a lot of people don't know what they are putting into their system. There is rarely any real dope out there, if that's what you want to call it, it's a mix of substances killing people. So, one of the things we do is we go out and make sure that we try to keep people safe, because you cannot recover if you're dead. And you know, excuse my blunt approach, but this is the subject that has to be broached. These services are needed in Darlington. We purposely operated almost a year before we approached the council, because we wanted to bring you all some numbers. So, the need is here, we are here. We just opened up a facility in Dillon County because we got a grant that allowed us to get a space to operate in. We do not have operating space in Darlington County. We do not have the funds to pay for space in Darlington County and the City of Darlington. So if there is any available spaces, we don't need it for the rest of the year. What we would like to do is find a space where we could tell people that we would be set up as this organization, maybe four to six hours once a week, could be twice a week, depending on what's available. Just so people in the city and the citizens will know where they can get help. We've been operating outside in the streets. It's getting cold out there. We also do a rapid HIV and hepatitis C testing. We've tested outside of the Darlington Motel twice. Folks have tested positive. We've linked them to care. But it's getting cold outside. We did an open-air event with Crazy Hope, with Mark face and his folks. We did operation Mill Hill and Operation Dargan Street. We're going to be in Mill Hill again, I believe February 1st. So, we're in the community, we would like to have a place to set up so people know where to come. And we could also use that space to have what we call recovery meetings, support meetings for these individuals and their families. One more thing before any questions, I have two letters that I like to read. One is from Rubicon. For those who don't know, Rubicon is the state certified agency that does addictions and substance use disorder treatment in Darlington. I am writing this letter in support of CARPS SC and their RCO program that engages rural counties in South Carolina as a state recognized county SUV authority in this region. Rubicon has witnessed firsthand that state infectious opioids and opioid related overdoses in Darlington County. Agency has provided intervention, prevention and treatment services including MIT and peer recovery support services. CARPS SC will provide evidence-based recovery support services and linkage to treatment services when appropriate. I'm going to stop right there. Rubicon has allowed us to come to their facility once a month and test their participants for Hepatitis C and HIV. This letter is from the City of Dillon. I am writing this letter in support of CARPS SC, the state funded nonprofit, has effectively engaged in the City of Dillon and of surrounding regions, providing recovery support services to community members impacted by substance use disorder. They have utilized nonclinical interventions, including motivational interviewing, family support and Linkage to Care at no cost, at no cost to its participants. This nonprofit is wholly aligned with the needs of the community and will help deliver a positive impact on the overall

health and wellness outcomes in any community. And I'm submitting these because we want to do the same thing here whether we have the space or not, we're going to still persevere or press on, but we're asking. We are nonprofit. We have three state contracts. We have a couple private foundation grants, but as you all know, it's not easy to get grant money, so we're asking the city to help us out. We don't want money; we just need four walls. I have some brochures here. Thank you all for your time. Mayor Boyd asked what size room are you looking for? Mr. Jacobs said truthfully, Mr. Mayor, all we need is one room or two rooms with a bathroom. Councilwoman Baccus asked so you trying to be at the location once a month, or several times a month. Mr. Jacobs said well I talk with and I need to apologize to my partner the Executive Director. She's actually facilitating the group meeting in Dillon, that's once a week because we cover four counties. So, we talked about it before I came here. We would like to start once a week, try it out for like 90 days, and if the need increases, then we could possibly move to two days a week. We are in the process of hiring right now, and once we get more staff, we'll be able to cover more territories. Councilwoman Baccus said so you're looking for, like you said, one or two rooms with the bathroom. But do you need the furniture? Or you already have some furniture. Mr. Jacobs said well beggars can't be choosers. And I am begging, if you can throw some chairs up, they'll be great. Councilwoman Baccus said I would say ask for it. Mr. Jacobs said yes ma'am, we've managed to purchase some fold up tables and fold up chairs, but that's all we have. So, furniture come along with that be great as well. Councilwoman Reed said something in reference to the administration building. Councilwoman Baccus said the buildings on Exchange Street are going to waste. Councilwoman McRavin said so you are, if I can ask you, are also wanting to do support meetings, right? Mr. Jacobs said oh yes. Thank you because, again, like I said, my partner, my executive director, she's actually facilitated meetings now. We facilitate what's called an all-recovery meeting. It's different from a 12-step meeting, where you have 12 step meetings where you follow a rigid discipline. All recovery meetings are for anyone that wants to come in. There are folks who are in churches, mosques, masjids, who, through their faith, have been able to overcome substance use disorder. They may or may not identify as someone in recovery, but they're welcome to our meetings, because whatever they're doing is working. So, our recovery meetings, we have folks from all walks of life, and I'm going to keep it very, very honest, we have folks in our meetings who are still actively using; but that does not mean they are not trying to seek a better path. So, we welcome them as well. The one thing we say is, you know, if you're intoxicated, come back. Just come back when you can. But the all recovery meeting we would definitely want to reserve space for that, and that takes it's about an hour meeting. Councilwoman McRavin said so all of your services are totally clear to anyone who comes, whether it's HIV testing, hepatitis C testing, the Narcan, you give test strips for fentanyl. Mr. Jacobs said the fentanyl test strips everyone knows those the state has contracted with us to provide fentanyl test strips and xylazine test strips. We also give out wound care supplies. We actually have a medical director, so he oversees that component. We give out wound care supplies, bandages, gauze pads and ointment things of that nature. Because if you have someone who's in a, I'll say, a debilitating state, and they don't have primary care and they're caught up in that downward spiral, they can have a cut on their hands, or anything

can happen, and they'll, you know, they get infected, and then you wind up in the ER, and that's costing us citizens more money. So wound care is part of what we do as well. Councilman Milling said your support meetings, they take place during like nine to five in the daytime hours, or they take place like at seven, eight or nine o'clock the evening. Mr. Jacobs said the support meeting that we have now is from six to seven, depending on what kind of space, if the city would be so gracious to assist us, we could have a meeting during the daytime because like I said, I live here, so it's entirely possible that my partner could do a meeting in the evening in Dillon and I could come here early and do one here in the afternoon. But again, it's not about us. It's about what the community needs. So, once we get into a space, as folks come on, we'll find out, because we understand that people do work, one of the things, one of the stigmatizing ideas about substance use disorders is everyone who we are dealing with is homeless and don't work. That is so not true. It's not true. And it's also, it could be a family member who's never taken a drink in their life or took a drug in their life that just wants to get some kind of help or support. They're welcome too. And if they have to work, and if we have enough people that wants to do an evening meeting, we can do a meeting from six to seven, or we can do a meeting from twelve to one, which works for some folk's lunch breaks, because, again, this is not our program. This is the community's program. So, we can put all we want in this brochure, but if it doesn't fit what the city of Darlington needs. The City of Darlington can tell me what y'all need, and we'll craft it. Councilwoman McRavin said I like that approach. Councilman Baccus said all you need is the space. Mr. Jacobs said yes ma'am. And if I can rattle off a couple more community partners. We have community partners with Rubicon, Care South, Hope Health and House of Hope. We work with Owl's Nest in Florence and Trinity treatment in the Marion and Dillon area. Councilwoman Reed wanted to know how he would meet with people until he gets the space. So if I contact you; you were saying you meet any place, in homes and all that. Mr. Jacobs said that I actually met someone at home last Friday evening. But I'm going to do some recon. I'm going to make sure it's safe for me, because, although my primary concern is to help someone get from one day to the next, if something happens to me, then my family would not like that. Councilwoman Reed said we want you to be safe and we need this. Councilwoman Reed said that I'm truly appreciative that you're making this presentation, because the numbers are rising and it contributes to a lot of our crime as well, and as well as our homelessness. So we're quite appreciative of your presentation, knowing that you're here and wanting to be here. Mr. Jacobs said and that's another one of the things that we've done recently, we've partnered with Eastern Carolina Housing Organization. It's a long process, but a lot of folks who are unhoused don't know that it exist, so I've been able to make contact with them, and all it takes me is about five minutes for the person to sit still. I go on my phone, I get the information, and I put them on the list to get housing. I mean, it's temporary at first, but their overall goal is to have this person with a lease. So, we do the information. If they don't have email address, they use my email address. If they don't have a mailing address, they use one our community centers. So, it's about substance use disorder, but there's a lot of things holistically that need to be addressed. So, we do that again, we do the HIV and Hep C. We try to help folks with housing. If it's mental health, we connect with Pee Dee Mental Health. So we just try to come at it from all different areas, because each person is

different in their own struggles. So we got to meet them where they are. And when I first meet with the person, I tell them my name, and then I shut up. I don't talk a lot now, because I have to, but I shut up, because if I keep talking, I'm not going to hear what they need. Councilwoman McRavin said so you address it from not just a drug substance abuse disorder, you are addressing the entire person to holistically. You are trying to address all of their needs, because you realize that it's not just one thing. So I appreciate this information, and I certainly hope that the rest of Council and I can figure out and find some place that we can maybe do something to help them have a facility so that they can continue to help our community. Because it does affects us all, whether our industries and trying to get businesses in. If you can help clean up the drug problem in the area and it lowers crime, that's a benefit and a plus for the city. Mr. Jacobs said that one thing I failed to mention is I am a certified Peer Support Specialist, which is a national designation. It's federally recognized. SAMHSA has approved it. The State of South Carolina has a certification process. I'm also part of the Certification Commission as a Certified Peer Support Specialist. You can gain employment at Rubicon. You gain employment at McLeod, at Care South, at Hope health, you can work in Department of Corrections and do exactly what I do. Our facility in Dillon is one of six approved training sites. So as we work with folks, we let them know as you progress, if you get one year, 365 days, under your belt of what we call sustained recovery. You can work for us, and we start $17 a month. If anyone has any questions, I'm available. Thank you. Thank you.

REQUEST FOR SPLASH PAD CONSTRUCTION COMPLETION

Ms. Sheila Jones said So, we did get our permit from DHEC to continue working on the splash pad, and so I've provided you all an update of what it's going to cost to complete it. I do recommend doing it in two phases. One phase is everything except the concrete and parking, to the total of $22,761.19. Phase two will begin sometime late February, early March, when the temperature will allow us to do concrete work from right now and the rest of winter, it's too cold to pour concrete. Ms. Jones said then I will come back to you all for phase two to get the concrete work done. Councilman Milling asked Ms. Jones if she got any magic wand as to what we might find as an increase to concrete cost between now and then. Ms. Jones said I'm pretty confident, considering the lapse in time that it's been since we got the original estimate and how much it's going to cost. I was only able to get an updated estimate from one of the contractors. The other contractor, I imagine I'll get it sometime this week. Ms. Jones said that it shouldn't increase. Mayor Boyd asked do you have one bid so far for the concrete, right? Ms. Jones said I got the highest bid. The contractor that had the highest bid to begin with is the only one I got back. The lower one which is the one in the original update that I gave you all, is the one that is lacking. So I imagine that the concrete work will go down. I'm hoping that it'll go down so it won't be that $53,000 amount. Councilman Milling said Ms. Gloria, do we have the $22,000 in our account to cover the hospitality account to cover this and meet our other obligations? Ms. Pridgen said that we have almost depleted our hospitality account. She said because remember I told you all we had that invoice that was going through this month, over $220,000, I just had to pay that. So right now, we're kind of strapped for funds. She said that we could probably find it in the general fund not the Hospitality Tax right now. Mayor

Boyd said that I have $44,600 in cash. Our new senator gave us a grant yesterday for $53,000 for the splash pad in a PARD grant at the match of 20% so that gives us cash wise $44,600. Ms. Pridgen asked if we got the money? Mayor Boyd said I got the agreement last night. Ms. Pridgen asked when are we going to get the money? Lee Andrews said that we have to fill out the paperwork, turn the paperwork in, and they'll give us the grant money. He said if we get the grant for $53,000 it's a 20% match. So that's where the $44,000 is. But you're going have to pay the 53,000 upfront, and then they reimburse you 80% of that money. So what I understand, Senator Chaplin has pledged to give us the $53,000 PARD grant. All we got to do is paperwork. Councilman Bryant said my suggestion is we get some quotes for concrete over the next month, and in January, revisit the subject, put it all together and see what we can come up with. My suggestion, I don't really want to wait till March or April, because I don't want to get into the warm season. Ms. Jones said we won't be able to pour in February. Average temperatures in South Carolina won't allow us likely to pour before then, because the ideal temperature, according to the Concrete Institute, is between 50 and 60 degrees, and the average temperature in South Carolina doesn't hit that until the end of February, early March. Councilman Bryant said as long as the temperature gets up there. Councilwoman Reed said okay, so just for my understanding everything that you have cited, but it's $75,000 we covered. Ms. Jones said no. The $75,000 is what's still needed in order to complete the project. Councilman Reed said so the new senator has pledged that. Councilwoman Baccus said but you got to pay the$ 53,000 up front first then you get reimbursed. Councilwoman Reed said and we are paying the $53,000 to who? Ms. Jones said to the contractors. You have to fund the project, and then you get reimbursed for the grant. Councilwoman Baccus said you're not getting $53,000 you're only getting $44,000 but you got to have a 20% match. Councilwoman Reed said I mean, still saying if the grant, but this is not the grant I'm saying. I'm thinking, are we talking two separate monies from Senator Chaplin and a grant. Councilman Gardner said the money from Senator Chaplin will go towards paying for the difference. Councilwoman Baccus said that Senator Chaplin is the grant, that's what we were just talking about. Councilwoman Reed said because it sounds like you're talking two different things. The grant from Senator Chaplin, that's why I asked. Ms. Jones said right. Councilwoman Reed said so we have to pay up front. It's going back to this grant that Chaplin is providing. Ms. Jones said so the city would have to pay. Councilwoman Reed said that's a yes or no question. Ms. Jones said that the city of Darlington would have to pay for the project completion. And once the city of Darlington pays, then the grant would reimburse the city. But we have to pay, we have to fund it first. Councilman Milling asked how much is the grant reimbursement? Mr. Andrews said okay, so what you have there is what's left to finish the splash pad, right? Which is $75,000 okay. So, what we're suggesting is to do it in phases. To do the first phase which would be everything except the concrete and parking, which is the bathrooms, all the water and all the plumbing is what that is for $22,000. Then phase two, which is concrete parking and the fencing, which fencing has already been taken care of, because we bought that way back. So, the $53,000 would finish out the parking spaces, which is handicapped parking, and make the inside of it ADA accessible and to do the ring that DHEC needs around the splash pad. The senator has said that we could get a PARD grant. Okay, we have to apply for it. It's money within the county. It is a

80/20 match. So you are still going to have to come out of pocket for that $53,000, but it's not cash money, so to speak. It's a grant. So you pay that and then you get that money back. That's what that is. But it is not two separate pots of money. It is one grant for $53,000 but it's a 80/20 match. Councilman Milling said so we, in essence, spend $75,000 and we get $45,000 by way of a grant. Mr. Andrews said right. Councilman Milling said so we got to put $30,000 new money in it, but we got to put the whole $75,000 up front before we get $45,000 back. Mr. Andrews said yes. Councilwoman McRavin asked are we guaranteed to get the money? You say we have to apply for this, so this basically is no real guarantee. Mr. Andrews said that Senator Chaplin said that he's going to give us the grant, and it's pretty much a done deal. Councilwoman McRavin said Okay. Councilman Milling said so that still puts us back at having to pull from general funds, the $22,000 or $23,000 because we don't have it in the hospitality tax fund. Councilman Milling asked do we have it in the general fund. Mayor Boyd said the piece of property will be sold next week for $21,000. Councilman Milling asked is it going to close next week? Mayor Boyd said the piece of property that we sold off 151 Highway will be sold on the 18th of December for $21,000. Councilwoman Reed asked what property is that? Mayor Boyd said the section on 151. Councilman Gardner said going forward with phase one, I'm fine with that. I would like to get a few quotes on the concrete side. Ms. Jones said so one quote has already been updated. I'll have another quote likely the end of this week or the beginning of next week, and I'll figure out another quote. Councilman Gardner said I don't mind going in front of the first half. Councilman Gardner said now how's that working with the grant. Do we need to fund it all at one time? Mr. Andrews said no, but we're going to have to specify in the grant what we're spending the money on. Councilman Gardner said Okay. Mr. Andrews said if we're going to do the first phase and you want to include that with the grant, we'd have to write it up that way. If you're going to do second phase and do the whole $53,000 for the second phase. We write it up that way. Councilman Gardner said but I don't want to come back less, and then we're losing that grant money and cost us in the long run. That's why we're worried about separating. And I say we just wait till next month, get the three quotes. Go ahead and prove everything. As soon as we get warm days, if we don't get warm days, then we'll just wait till it warms up, as long as they'll hold the bid. Councilman Segars said since we got several months before we can actually pour the concrete between phase one it gives us an opportunity for more grant money for the second phase. Mr. Andrews said possibly. Councilman Gardner said separate from the Senator. Mr. Andrews said I mean, probably not separate from the Senator. You might could ask the Senator for more money. There's other grants out there. I'd have to check see if we're eligible for. Mayor Boyd said that they only have so much money in PARD grants. Mr. Andrews said right. Councilman Gardner said do you want to hold off until next month or go with the first phase. Councilwoman Baccus said Gloria you are saying hospitality money has been blown. Ms. Pridgen said I gave y'all a list of these, some big ticket expenses, invoices that we got to pay this month, I think I gave you all the copies. So, this is what we'll be spending out of our general fund, and that's going to be this month when we do the bulk of our bills, the Insurance Reserve fund, that's like $243,000 dollars that's on the building all of our properties. We have a bond invoice that came in today that's going to be about $123,000. Ms. Pridgen said I just want you all to see what's coming due. You know when you think

about spending money, this is what we got to do this month. Councilwoman Baccus said okay, remind me again, Gloria, please how much we spent last month out of hospitality on Christmas? Ms. Pridgen said well, Hunter had part of it coming out of his budget, and part came out of H-Tax which was I think was $8,000 out of Hunters, and $8,000 out of H-tax. Councilwoman Reed said okay, we know you are going to pay the bills, besides whatever you pay out of the bill, do we have the money to do whatever we need to do for the splash pad? That's all I mean. Mayor Boyd said if we split it, when you apply for the grant, can you put the first half in. Mr. Andrews said then we have to be specific. So yeah, we could, but we have to be specific on what we wrote the grant for the first time. Mayor Boyd said so if you wrote the grant for this first part, she's saying is $23,000. Mr. Andrews said right. Mr. Andrews said we could write it for the first part and then do another grant for the second part. Councilman Gardner said two separate grants. Councilman Milling said we write the grant for a single entity and just pay for it in phases and not pay the $22,000 and then get reimbursed 80% pay the $53,000 and get reimbursed, and just have the payouts work with our schedule, but just write it as a single grant. Mr. Andrews said that I have to check to make sure we can do that. Councilwoman Baccus said so you said all of this Gloria got to come out of general fund. Ms. Pridgen said we pay that out of the general fund. Councilman Gardner said I think if we split everything up then we worry about losing potential grant money, I say we wait 30 days to get quote. Basically, we got a credit for the $53,000 that can be split. Councilman Gardner said you think it can be split, without being an issue. Mayor Boyd said we just write the grant that way he has approval to give out. I'm okay. Councilwoman Baccus said this month we got to pay $484,981.94 out of general fund. I don't think we need to spend another$23,000. We can't use the pad no way until March or April. We can't open it anyway. Mayor Boyd said if we keep waiting it will never get done. Councilwoman Baccus said that don't make no sense. Ms. Pridgen said you got to go ahead and use it or otherwise you will lose it. Councilwoman Reed said the money is available. I understand with y'all, but we going to pay bills. I mean, that's normal, just because it $400,000 this month, it may be the same thing. My point is we got some help now, a grant that will provide us some to pay for us going forward with the splash pad, what are we waiting on? Councilwoman McRavin said I think, if I'm understanding correctly, I was trying to say, we want to make certain that if we split it, first of all, we get the quotes and that it's not over this. Ms. Jones said it's not going to be over that, this is the highest one. Councilwoman McRavin said that we want to make certain that the grant is written properly, so that we can get all the funds back. Because what we don't want is not to be able to have a grant written and then it's written one way, and you can only allot it for what is written for, and it comes back at a different cost, and we can't get all of our money. Councilwoman Reed said that I'm with you. Everyone talking at the same time. Mr. Andrews said we can do the grant in phases. We can do phase one and then phase two. We can do it that way. But if all we got is $53,000 that he's pledged to us, we have to write it for $22,000 the first time, and then $31,000 the next. Mayor Boyd said those can be written in phases. So I suggest to go ahead and do the first phase, let her work on getting quotes for the second part, because we can't do the second part anyway right now, and the first part go ahead and get that done. Councilman Gardner said I'm fine with that. The only thing is I'd like to add a caveat is let me check and make sure that we don't harm ourselves

in the grant. And if we're not harming ourselves then exercise the Council's wish, if we are, just wait 30 days, have the quotes done, then we can vote it all in as one project. Councilwoman Reed said but she said she got the highest bid. She already said that this amount is the highest bid. Councilman Gardner said well, we don't have three bids, so we can't even vote on the second half, even if we wanted to. Councilwoman Baccus said how many times have y'all done voted without three bids. Some council members discussing about the three bids. Councilwoman Reed said so with that in mind, do it all one time, so we won't lose nothing. Councilman Gardner said I don't know if we can. Councilwoman Reed said why. Mayor Boyd said we can vote for this and get two more bids, it won't be no higher than the $75,000, right? Mr. Andrews said I know that he's pledged us 50. He's pledged that. He said he's going to give us the grant, if you want to wait a month and let us get prices and check things and do that, it's not going to hurt us to come back in January, and if that helps out with that, it's not going to hurt us to do that, because we're not going to start in January. Ms. Jones said we're definitely not going to do concrete in January. Mr. Andrews said we could do plumbing and stuff. It's the holidays, nobody's going to get a plumber out. I wouldn't think over the holidays. He said waiting a month is not going to make or break this project. So if you want us to do more due diligence. Mayor Boyd said well, here's the thing, we've waited long enough we spent the governor's money, Robert Williams money, put this out there. They're offering us more money to get it out there, and we continue to wait, and it's going to be time for the Splash Pad again, and then it won't be done. My suggestion is to go ahead and split this like Bryant said, split it call the Senator tomorrow and find out if it's going to be a problem. If it's a problem then we'll back up and we will look at it. Mr. Andrews said that the grant process is not going to be a problem. Mayor Boyd said right. She has bids on the electrical stuff. If you go ahead and call tomorrow, make a start. They might not start till January, but at least if you're in line ready to start, you wait till after January it could be four more people lined up, and you'll be back up again.

Mayor Boyd made a motion to go ahead and do the $22,761.19 with the understanding that we will check with Senator Chaplin to make sure there's no issue, as you said, to go and get the electrical part done with the electrical, plumbing and so forth. The storage, pool contractor, cameras, signs and no concrete or paving at this time for parking. So no concrete or parking at this time be totaled $22,761.19 with using the PARD grant, 80% for them and 20% for us. Councilman Bryant Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, Segars and Reed voted in favor of the motion. Councilpersons McRavin and Baccus voted "No."

Council members taking among themselves.

APPROVAL OF 2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

January 7, 2025, February 4, 2025, March 4, 2025, April 1, 2025, May 6, 2025, June 3, 2025, July 1, 2025, August 12, 2025, September 2, 2025, October 7, 2025, November 11, 2025, and December 2, 2025.

Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion for the approval of 2025 City Council Meetings dates. Councilman Segars seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, McRavin, Baccus, Reed and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

REMINDERS

December 7, 2024: Christmas Festival on the Public Square and Photos with Santa in Wells Park at 6:00
December 8, 2024: Tree Lighting for Kiwanis at 5:00
December 12, 2024: City Employee Supper at 6:30
December 20, 2024: Christmas Movie Night (Elf) in Wells Park at 6:00
December 24-26, 2024:City offices closed for Christmas
January 1, 2025: City offices closed for New Year's Day
January 7, 2025: City Council Meeting

Councilwoman McRavin said we have a Work session on next Tuesday, December 10, 2024. Mayor Boyd asked do we still want to have the work session on December 10, 2024. Councilwoman McRavin said because there are some issues. We received emails about that pump station that needs to be moved, that we need to address. We also need to address it with other personnel issue. We received an email regarding some issues that need to be looked at immediately. Councilwoman Baccus said that we need to address county council meeting last night about the council selling that property on 151 and giving them the Carnegie Library. We definitely need to address that. Councilwoman McRavin said those things need to address because they gave us a 90 day window. Council members talking among themselves. Councilwoman McRavin said we need to announce the fact that we have a new City Manager that's going to be starting right? Hallelujah. We look forward to having her here, and hopefully you'll be able to introduce her to the public before the new year. Councilman Milling said that will be the 10th, she does not start until the eleventh. Councilwoman Reed said so what have we canceled it? Councilwoman McRavin said it was not listed here and the mayor didn't say anything. I am just reminding everyone. Mayor Boyd said is it at 5:30? Councilwoman McRavin said 5:30 is what we said previously. Councilman Milling said I just got to throw it out. This isn't anything to vote on, or anything whether I want to make an inquiry or not. Back in the summertime, can't remember whether we were approached or we approached somebody, but there was some discussion about the Carnegie Library and the solicitor's office using the Carnegie Library. We've now had an election so we know who the solicitor is. I did not know whether you wanted me just to reach out to this newly elected solicitor and find out if they've got any interest in using the Carnegie Library for staff, or whether just to leave it alone. Councilwoman Baccus said so you didn't know county council agenda last night in their meeting, it was about this, them buying that property on 151 from the city, and the city donating the Carnegie Library. You didn't know that? Councilman Milling said I know that there was some things that were going on that were discussions, but I know that the city had not taken any action to specifically authorize a sale of anything that requires an ordinance and two readings before we can sell any properties that we have. Councilwoman Baccus said well, I understand that I'm asking you. You didn't know that

that was on the agenda. Councilman Milling said I know that Janet Bishop sends me the agenda, but I did not read the agenda. But I know that there were things on the agenda relating to city properties. Yes, my question now is whether or not we're not bound by what was on that agenda with county council. My question now is just simply, are we interested in approaching the newly elected solicitor to see if he has any interest in using the Carnegie Library. Councilman Gardner said that I am totally fine with you reaching out to the solicitor to see if he has any use for it. Mayor Boyd said that I'm in favor of it. Councilwoman Reed said but the indication about the county council meeting is simply that there's conversations going on that we're not aware of. We would like for those conversations, if it was that even the solicitors officer using the Carnegie Library, the county administrators entering in and making a bid for this and that, and the Carnegie Library is included in any of those discussions, we ought to know that's all. Councilman Milling said I'm just trying to ask the question. I'm not trying to hide anything. I will, since nobody has said, don't do it, I will reach out to the solicitor. Councilwoman Reed said it is not for you to answer, John. It is a statement that's being made. And all I'm saying like you're asking about the Carnegie Library and what you should do in relative to the Solicitor's Office, which is another county office, and on the agenda last night the county council was discussing it, Carnegie Library. Oh, and we're only learning about it. Elaine is only learning about it tonight, and I was aware that it was, no I saw it on the agenda. Councilwoman Baccus said, and they discussed it last night. Councilwoman Reed said so that's what I mean. Councilman Milling said the solicitor is not a county position, it is a circuit position, Darlington County is one of them. But I'm just saying, part of what I'm saying is there are options other than what was discussed. And I will approach the solicitor to see if he has any interest. Councilwoman Baccus said before that property and Carnegie Library was offered to the county or anybody else, Council should have discussed it. Councilman Milling said that I'm not getting in any debate. I'm just dealing with the issue at hand. Councilwoman McRavin said well, I'll say I appreciate you asking us about it, and let's talk about it.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to adjourn the city council meeting at 7:08 PM. Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Segars, Milling, McRavin, Baccus and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of adjourning the meeting.

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Mayor

ATTEST:

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Assistant Clerk & Treasurer