CITY OF DARLINGTON

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2025
6:00 PM
OLD COUNCIL CHAMBERS IN CITY HALL
400 PEARL STREET, DARLINGTON, SC 29532

Present: Mayor Curtis Boyd, City Manager Lenessa Hawkins, Councilpersons Shelia Baccus, Angela McRavin, Bryant Gardner, Elaine Reed, John Milling and John Segars. Also, present were Hunter Thomas, Ruth Ann Dickey, Linwood Epps, Steve Abbott, Sean Odom, Michael Morris, Officer Joyce Coe, Officer Kawon Martin, and others.

Mr. Stephan Drew with the News & Press was 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.

Councilwoman McRavin said that she would like to amend the agenda by adding for us to talk about trash with the Street and Sanitation Department. Councilwoman McRavin made a motion to add under Council Workshop as number three. Mayor Boyd said discussion of trash pick-up. Councilwoman McRavin said yes. Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion. Councilman Milling asked will the discussion be anything new. Councilwoman McRavin said yes sir. Councilman Milling said if you can just tell me what that is I just don't want to go through two hours like we did the last time. Councilwoman McRavin said No, we don't want to do that again. Councilman Gardner said what's the subject. Councilwoman McRavin said discussion of trash and truck information and some misinformation that we have so we can make a better decision. Councilman Gardner said some misinformation. Councilwoman McRavin said yes. Mayor Boyd said do we have a first or second, yes or no. Councilman Gardner said when did we get the information that we had misinformation? Councilwoman McRavin said we can talk about that. Councilman Gardner said when did you hear about it? Because if you heard about it like before the 24-hour period, we could have asked to put it on the agenda, so I'm curious. Councilwoman McRavin said I had this information today so I would like for us to discuss this. Councilwoman Reed said plus one of the things we said last meeting we would in two weeks look at it again. Councilwoman McRavin said I thought that's what we were discussing today anyway. Councilwoman Reed said a part of the decision the majority voted on was about to repair and then we would look back at it. I think it was still up in the air about sourcing it out as well as maybe looking

at whether we would need to purchase one but anyway. Councilman Gardner said do we have all that information for council or are we going to discuss those issues or is it just we're going to discuss the misinformation? Councilman Milling said I don't think it would be appropriate to discuss the purchase of a new truck because that was voted down at the last meeting so somebody who voted not to purchase a truck would have to be the one who makes the motion. He said I don't mind amended it for some update maybe, but I'm not interested into getting in to the… Councilwoman Reed said and neither am I John all I was just trying to do is that it was said in the meeting that in the next two weeks we would be coming back to that subject. Councilman Bryant said I think we got the agenda sent to us at like 11:59 on Monday, is that right, 11:59 PM, which gives us a minute to change it before the City Council Ordinance says 12:00 PM is when we have to post it to the public right? So, I understand we only had a minute to cover this. We've have been through this. I have lost count on how many amendments we've made to the agenda over the last three or four months. There was a lengthy discussion about adding an item to the agenda. Eventually the agenda item was added. All voted in favor except Councilman Gardner.

New Business

Council Conduct - Mayor Boyd

Mayor Boyd said he asked that this be put on there tonight. The Robert Rule of Order ask and requires us as a Council to work as adults together. Just like we just had a while ago, one person talking to the other one, somebody else back and forth talking. I asked that Council as we move forward, from this point on, from here, if you have something to say during the discussion whether we're at any special meeting or workshop that you just raise your hand. I will address you and let you address the floor. At this point we are all guilty of wanting to continue to talk and then we'll take a break and somebody else thinks you're done, and you're not done. Not that I'm limiting your time, but I'm asking that you have two minutes to talk. I will time it just like I time the people. Then if somebody else wants to talk, then they have two minutes to talk. Then if that person wants to talk back again, I'm not saying that you only have two minutes. You can start back, well all of us get carried away a lot of times and want to continue to talk way more than we should. So just to keep everything orderly as my position and job to do so that we all are not talking over top of each other is that I ask from here on out that when you need to address the Council just address me and then I'll make a notation of it and give you that time. So, I apologize to the public it's my responsibility as the mayor to control the Council. And so that's my job to do and the staff and Council to work with me and we all work together and do the best we can for the City of Darlington. Thank you.

Old Business

Action on Asbury Street Project Request for Sewer Collection – Michael Morris

Mr. Morris gave out a map of the area. The mayor asked did either one of them wanted to come up, Mr. Morris and Bryant Reing from Davis & Brown. Mayor Boyd said I spoke with the developer the other day they came out of Indian Trail. They gave us a sheet of paper that we got here where we discussed this last week and there are 11 pieces of property here on Asbury that they have been working on from my understanding for about a year with the county, correct. Mr. Morris said a little over two years. Mayor Boyd said you can tell me if I am right or wrong, which direction from …… (he is referring to the handout). Mayor Boyd said the sewer line is already here, it doesn't quite connect to the eleven pieces of property here. There is a developer and there is also a builder that he has. The developer and the builder together have already worked on a project. It's my understanding, correct me if I'm wrong, they have packages already worked together for what they want to try to sell the houses for he's asking not to have to annex in but to be able to adapt into our sewer system. They will run the sewer lines from the back here all the way down to Asbury to connect the lots into our sewer system. The mayor said he has talked with Mr. Morris, and our sewer system is, you know, we can handle what we're looking at right now. Possibly 250 homes that could come into Darlington if all of our I's are dotted and our T's are crossed and the world evolves the way we want it. He said we can possibly have 250 houses or so in the next year or so in the City of Darlington. Mayor Boyd said he asked Mr. Morris about that if it's capacity wise. Mayor Boyd said that he has stated that it will not affect us at all. So, capacity wise, these eleven homes will not hurt us at all to be added in, but the Council as opposed to the developer would like to have these properties inside the city. He's not really interested in the incentive plan because they have already done work with the county for two years and it would kind of backtrack them and stall them on their progress and they are ready to get started this is why I went ahead and brought this on here tonight, so if we can get a discussion and decision made on this. So that he knows what's going to happen and what steps he needs to take. Mayor Boyd said he is with Davis & Brown, I'm asking Council if you got a question raise your hand. Councilwoman Reed said just to be clear as to what they're wanting to tap into our sewer system but do not want to be annexed. Mayor Boyd said yes. Councilwoman Reed said and the reason for not wanting to be in is because it would delay them. Mr. Bryant Reing said that one it would delay them and the process itself would change. He said that they had been through three rounds through the Planning Department with Darlington County. He said they are getting pretty close to proceeding with construction through Darlington County so by annexing the only properties that are eligible are those four. The rest of them are not congruent, so they are not eligible to be annexed in. Mr. Reing said that so it would be some sort of split development plan if that's possible. He said I don't know how that would work, and the developer is not a fan of that.

Different council members talking at the same time. Councilman Milling said has anything been built yet? Mr. Reing said no they are still wooded lots. Councilman Milling said so if they petition to come in, the annexation procedure should not take very long to have the properties annexed into the city. Mr. Reing said that even if it happens tonight, the permitting and planning is what would be extended. Councilman Gardner said I understand that they don't want to re go through planning, that's the issue right. Mr. Reing said that is the main issue. Councilman Gardner said that we've had properties that's been built and as soon as they are built, they then get annexed in. That's something that I would be interested in. He said you can go through the building of the property with challenge, but as soon as the homes are built then, especially the four properties, I would want them to be annexed into the city. Councilman Gardner said that I am one Councilperson, but my interest would say that I don't want to slow down your development. I don't want to make you go start over and go through all new Planning Commission and all the fees and costs and time to go with that. I don't want to slow down the development. I want them to build the homes, and I appreciate them coming to Darlington. But if they are going to be utilizing our system, my opinion would be that once the homes are built, especially the four homes that they go and immediately and extend into the city, which would not change anything with their planning or anything on that side of the ball game. Councilwoman Baccus said her concern would be have they done any engineering drawings. Mr. Reing said yes. Councilwoman Baccus said have they already been submitted to the county. Mr. Reing said yes. Councilwoman Baccus said is that section that they are trying to build on does DHEC approve. Mr. Reing said for the sewer? Councilwoman Baccus said yes. Mr. Reing said yes, that's what was brought before you at the last meeting was the construction permit. Mr. Reing said the construction permit is to construct the sewer to extend the sewer from your existing location down to the end of the street. They would pay for that construction per your city specifications, and then the city would take ownership of that and then the taps that they tap, they would pay those tap fees after you take ownership of that line. Councilwoman Baccus asked have they cleared through planning with the county? Mr. Reing said it has not been approved yet at their last meeting with the extensions of it and then there was an issue with DOT with the driveway that has been resolved through the county as well. Councilwoman Baccus said from what I understand DOT would not give individual driveways so are they doing shared driveways? Mr. Reing said they will be shared driveways. Mayor Boyd said Ms. Baccus when you were asking DHEC approved, DHEC approved as for our sewer system. Mayor Boyd and Mr. Reing are discussing the construction permit about sewer. Councilwoman McRavin said they are on county water, are they wanting water and sewer? Mr. Reign said this other side of the street; you have a six-inch water line with the hydrant at the end. Your line parallels to the existing sewer coming from where the church side..... Councilwoman McRavin asked if the county is

going to serve them water? Mr. Reing said the lower seven lots will be on county water. Councilwoman McRavin said the first four plus the two in the middle, they would be on city water? Mr. Reing said just the first four. There was a lengthy discussion with Mr. Reing and council members. Councilman Milling said that I'm not going to vote for it until it's all in writing. Councilman Milling said he wants it to be enforceable by him and enforceable by us. Councilman Gardner said if you want to walk outside so he has a clear understanding of what we're asking. If he wants a handshake deal to make sure nothing slows down on his side, I'm assuming we can do a handshake deal on us, but we're not going to officially vote on anything until we get it in writing like he says. But we can definitely come to an agreement tonight so that we cannot slow them down anymore. Councilman Milling said I think we pretty much told him what our agreement is. Mayor Boyd said we will meet again on October 7th. Mr. Reign said, "would you like his answer five minutes from now? Councilman Bryant said if he needs an emergency meeting so he can build quicker. Councilman Gardner said that the mayor can call a meeting anytime he wants. Mayor Boyd said we can legally table this for a few minutes so you can ask him. Mr. Reign said that I appreciate that. Mayor Boyd said thank you. Mayor Boyd said we will table it for a short period of time. Mayor Boyd said thank you everyone. Thank you for taking the time to raise your hand and everybody working together, I appreciate it.

Discussion on water and sewer fees for outside city limits.

Mayor Boyd explained that they were not raising water bills for everybody in the county. He said that there were a certain amount of people using city water that lived in the county that our using our system. He said we are looking at the situation there to see what their rates are and how it works. Mayor Boyd called upon Ms. Hawkins.

Ms. Hawkins handed out paperwork and explained the three tiers, the 30% increase on the base rate, the 30% on the base rate plus the per 1,000 rate at 30%. She said she also did a base rate at 30% plus the tier. She stated that she thinks that should cover everything you asked for. She said starting with sewer outside residential. Currently, the base rate is $43.64. The current per 1000-gallon usage rate is $8.74 and that means if you use 1000 gallons or if you use 500,000 gallons, it's still $8.74. Unlike our inside city rates. She explained that the second column is the base rate with 30% increase would go from $43.64 to $56.73 and the rate increase on the per gap 1000-gallon usage would go from $8.74 to $11.36, that's the 30%. You asked for a 30% increase on the base rate, that's $56.73, meaning you won't pay the same thing from zero to whatever. You would have a break just like you do for residential inside city rates. The rate tier at zero to 5,000 will be $11.36. At 5,001 to 10,000 would be $12.38 per 1000 gallon. And then 10,001 and up is $13.50. Councilman Gardner stated that one thing that he thinks we need to fix immediately is the tier structure and make it more

equitable, because right now we are charging our city residents more after 5,000 gallons than we are out county residents. He said before we decided on the 30% increase that we need to adjust the county rates in the residential water, the residential sewer, the commercial water, the commercial sewer and the tier structure to make sure every institution who is using our water and our sewer infrastructure is a tier system equitably.

Council continues discussion and agrees to move it to the next council meeting with an update of numbers from Ms. Hawkins.

Discussion of Trash Pickup – Councilwoman McRavin

Councilman McRavin explained that council did not vote to purchase a truck however there was some information provided to council about oil not being in a truck and workers not following guidelines and checking the oil. She stated that Councilman Gardner suggested that there be checklists but actually they have already been doing checklists. Every time they get in a truck, these drivers have been completing a checklist and telling us, recording them for months, that there was an oil leak. For months this wasn't fixed, months of them saying a signal light was out on the back of the truck and reports that it was leaking hydraulic fluid. This is on the truck where the engine is gone. She questioned whether or not the department head had been looking at these reports and reviewing them and had that been taken care of when it was first reported, the engine might not have gone out. It could have been potion ally fixed. Councilman Gardner stated that he wanted to point out that when they are talking about employee related stuff, they should be doing that under executive session. It doesn't do any good to air out our dirty laundry when this stuff legally should be done behind closed doors. Councilman McRavin explained that she didn't mention any employees personal name when it was talked about in our last meeting. It was talked about as employees in general and told us that it wasn't being done. She explained that this was her research and through her research she wanted to share that with all of the council so that going forward, when they are making decisions and how they intend to proceed, they have the correct information of what's actually transpired. We've been brought here about trucks needing to be repaired and it being a distance, there are companies right here locally who actually work on trash trucks and who work on hydraulics. One of those companies several years ago has already done work for us, so there's no need to try and figure out how we are going to get a truck to Lexington, when there's a company 10 miles down the road willing to do the work for us. They are willing and they have the equipment to do it. That's the information that I am willing to share with you all.

Councilman Gardner stated that all department heads understand and know that we need communication now more than ever. If we are behind on our routes and by the time it gets close to 3:00 p.m., wherever they are, they need to stop, go and dump the truck so they can

continue on and then they can take the full truck in the morning to the dump as soon as it opens and repeat the process. Ms. Hawkins said we've talked about that multiple times, and apparently, I'm not being told. Ms. Hawkins said she will handle it.

Executive Session

In accordance with South Carolina Code 30-4-70 (b) (2) Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangement and proposed sale or purchase of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency, in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency.

(The council may act following the executive session.)

Councilman Milling made a motion to go into executive session at 7:31 PM. Councilman Gardner seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Upon motion of Councilman Gardner, seconded by Councilman Milling, to end the executive session at 8:05 PM.

Back In Session

Councilman Milling made a motion that we authorize the City Manager to negotiate with InCite with respect to the $5,000 refund and upon her receiving satisfactory proof that she has got an application and that the required amount to be spent has in fact been spent and that she be authorized to have a check issued to InCite for the reimbursement of the $5,000 fee. Councilman Gardner seconded the motion. Councilpersons McRavin, Segars, Reed, Baccus and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

Reminders

Saturday September 27, 2025, 10am, Public Forum at Harmon Baldwin Rec Center – 300 Sanders Street

Tuesday October 7, 2025, Regular City Council meeting, 6:00 PM City Hall, Old Council Chambers

Tuesday, October 21, 2025, City Council Workshop Session, 6:00 PM.

Adjournment

Upon motion of Councilwoman McRavin, seconded by Councilman Gardner, the meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM. All approved the motion to adjourn.

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Mayor

ATTEST:

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Clerk / Treasurer