CITY OF DARLINGTON
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE COURTROOM
LOCATED AT
400 PEARL STREET, DARLINGTON, SC
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 2, 2025 - AT 6:00 PM

PRESENT AT THE MEETING:
Mayor Curtis Boyd, City Manager Lenessa Hawkins, Councilpersons Baccus, McRavin, Gardner, Reed, Milling, and Segars. Also, present was Hunter Thomas, Steve Abbott, Gloria Hines, Linwood Epps, Sean Odom, Dyan Cohen, Michael Morris, Lucas Reed, Joyce Thomas, don Blakney, Alex Gainey, Ruth Dickey, Coleman Cannon, Jannie Lathan, City Attorney Kevin Etheridge, and others.

Mr. Stephan Drew from the News and Press was present at the meeting.

Invocation was by Mayor Curtis Boyd followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Hawkins asked if everyone could stand for a moment of silence for the City's deceased employee, Mr. Thomas McCray.

Councilman Gardner made a motion to switch Item #3 under "New Business" to Item #1 and switch Item #5 to Item #2. Councilman Milling seconded the motion. Councilpersons McRavin, Segars, Reed, Baccus and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to approve the minutes of our Regular City Council Meeting on August 12, 2025. Councilman Segars seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, McRavin, Baccus, Reed and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

CITIZENS WISHING TO APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL
Mr. Chesley Benjamin said he lives on Greenway Drive which is a dead-end street. He said it's basically a quiet street, but it is not as quiet as it used to be. Mr. Benjamin said a tree company moved into the end of the dead-end street and there are logging trucks coming in and out. He said to start with they cut down a number of trees and being a tree person that aggravated him. They have very large trucks in and out of the area. Last week they had an 18-wheeler come to deliver equipment. It is such a small street that he had to back from Spring Street all the way down their street. Mr. Benjamin said there are mostly older people that live on that street, and they have grandsons and granddaughters who play on this street, and they are concerned. They are starting to build a very large building approximately thirty to forty feet tall which had all of the framing hooked up, and all of a sudden, he took them down. It is very hard to go outside to sit and read because it is a distraction. Mr. Benjamin told council if there is anything they can do about that he would greatly appreciate it.

Ms. Hawkins said we are aware of this situation, and we have been in contact no less than two times with the homeowner. His perception of the ordinance differs from our interpretation, and it is being followed up with. Unfortunately, he feels he … and his interpretation that he does not have to move. But there are some backgrounds that I can't get into, however that's why the pylons came down because we're not in agreement with his interpretation. There is action, but that is a process.

Mr. Albert Lynn said he has lived on Greenway Drive for over forty years, and it is a quiet, serene little street and we have people that love to walk; they have children playing; they have people from other neighborhoods that like to ride their golf carts down their street. Several months ago, a guy moved into a house that has been vacant for over a year, and he was making improvements by cutting down a lot of trees. Mr. Lynn said he has three or four big yellow trucks that he had in his yard and what set him off was last week as I was leaving out of my driveway there was an 18-wheeler truck out here filling up to five gallons plus tanks of fuel oil. He said that scared him, so he went to the codes office and put in a complaint, and I talked to Mr. Fowler who told me he was compiling data to find out what can be done. Mr. Lynn said they are zoned R-10 Residential area and there is a chart that shows twenty-six different businesses that you can't have in R-10 areas, and I think one of those suits, but he'll have to make that judgement. Mr. Lynn said because it's a dead-end street, the man has to pass by everybody's house in the neighborhood. Several families have put up signs to tell them to slow down. Mr. Lynn said what we're asking council to do is to please help us to try to eliminate that business on our street.

Mr. Milas Gainey said he's here tonight to talk with them about some concerns he has with Codes Enforcement. He said he received a "notice of violation" letter a couple of weeks ago for a lot that he has on Bacote Street and Farm Street. The letter said I was in violation and the next notice I got I was going to be going to court and could be fined or put in jail. Mr. Gainey said when he got the letter he immediately went to the lot to measure it because he had a guy that he's been paying to cut the lot. He said on his way to the lot as he was riding down Main Street and there's property in the right-of-way…. It's been cut now and it looks good … that the city is responsible for cutting and it was two feet tall. Mr. Gainey said "And they want to send me a notice of violation and there wasn't a blade of grass on my lot that was over eight or ten inches tall, and the ordinance says eighteen inches tall. He said you need to make sure, if you're going to be sending notices of violation that there truly is a violation. And when you start talking about taking somebody to court 1) There's nobody in that department that's qualified or has been approved to send a notice or send me a summons to go to court and 2) the lady that signed it, signed it as the building official and she's not the building official. Mr. Gainey said the next thing is when it comes to inspections, I've got two projects going on right now and it took me four weeks to get gas on that street. The inspector went out two or three times. I called him twice myself and asked him to go out there. I called and requested an inspection, and he says he never got the request. He said he waited a week, and I called the gas company to see if they got the release which they had not, so I called back up here and the young lady in the office said she was waiting on the inspector. Mr. Gainey said he then called the inspector, and he said he had not gotten notice to go out. Finally, the inspector goes out again and he sends an email

to the young lady in the office telling her it's good to go or it's good to be released. Mr. Gainey said the young lady never sent the release to the gas company and after Mr. Fowler checked to see why it was never done and the young lady told him she thought he sent the release to the gas company. Mr. Gainey said he is building a house on Green Street, and it took him a month or three weeks to get power on that and last week they started putting in plumbing …… Mr. Gainey said it's aggravating what we're having to deal with now because it's Safebuilt. You can't call and request an inspection in the morning or afternoon. He said, some inspections are fine, but when you're talking about concrete. …. I've got concrete lined up for tomorrow and if she did not send him an inspection request and he's not nice enough to come out at my request, then I've got to put my concrete off another day. Mr. Gainey said she may not realize how important these inspections are, but she needs to step up a little bit and do what we ask her to do.

Mr. Mike Sprott said my wife and I live at 310 Wyandot Street. Back in 1990 I built my house, and we talked then about whether we were going to come into the city or not coming to the city. I talked to the city manager, and he said you ought to come into the city and we can give you water now and it won't be long, and we can give you sewer, so we made the decision to come in 35 years ago. I see on the agenda tonight that you're going to talk about adding sewer on Asbury Street. I hope this is for somebody that is an existing customer that's having problems and not for a new customer or a new development. He said after 35 years of waiting on sewer when we were told it won't be long …so before you do any more sewer like on Asbury Street, I would think that the city should worry about people that've been in the city for 35 years. He said look at the tax base. Look how much money has been spent in wards 1, 2 and 3. Ward 3 needs to get their fair share, so let's go ahead and finish the sewer on Wyandot.

Mr. Don Blakney said he's here to talk about the land situation he has going on, on Bacote Street. He said this past weekend again like he's previously complained about he still has snakes and field rats. Mr. Blakney said he found out that one of the landowners is from out of town. He asked, what do we do as far as having them be able to do what they need to do. Is there a process of waiting? Mr. Blakney said this has been going on for years and I would like to know if one of you all would like to live beside something like that your family is in your backyard and you got snakes and field rats coming across your yard. Mr. Blakney said this has been brought up to the city council several times. Something needs to be done and I'm asking you again to please look into that.

Ms. Gloria Hines said I am concerned about the trash truck because sanitation went up. Trash pickup and debris didn't get any better. I would say that we get ourselves together and be concerned about a new trash truck. I don't mind any streets being paved, but at this time we need a trash truck.

Ms. Ernestine Lyde said my concern is the same as Ms. Hines - the trash truck. I think the same thing about paving; I think the truck is more of a priority because the trash is on the side of the streets. I think our priority should be to get a truck first before you start spending money to pave the streets. We've been waiting to pave streets for a long time, but for this trash to be sitting there on the streets …that causes problems.

Mr. Bridges said all of the walks that the state has built, I know we aren't in charge of that, but I thought maybe you all could get around and look at all the handicap yellow spaces. He said some of them are filled with water. He said his neighbors have to walk around it and they have cars coming on Edwards and West Broad Streets. He said if they could get some of the states to put holes in the bottom, so they'll drain water where the senior citizens won't have to walk out in the street. He said he did it for three years. He said he might start doing it again, but people don't realize it takes money to do all of these things that we want, and these people try the best they can and there's so many dollars that can be precise for these things that we need. We need a trash truck, we need sewage, but this was done 50 years ago and that wasn't maintained, and these people try their best and all we do is put them down. He said my main concern was to get the state to put some holes in those yellow handicap spots because they are all over town and not just in my area. They just need to be fixed so these senior citizens, people with wheelchairs, and bicycles can ride through it. Mr. Bridges said, "I would appreciate anything that you all can do for the senior citizens that have to walk. Mr. Bridges said I appreciate what you're doing for the City of Darlington and the maintenance .... Just like the trucks you need to have somebody to do maintenance on the trucks every day. He said put grease on those hydraulics. Having maintenance and pre-maintenance would help a lot.

Mr. Sean Odom said before I say anything I want to give my props to our great city manager. She doesn't mind answering my phone calls. Any time I call her about a problem she doesn't mind saying let me get back to you or do you want to come down to my office? He said she might say it may take a few days, can I call you back and she will call me back. Mr. Odom said, I just Thank God that the Lord has sent her to us. Mr. Odom said during this past week I saw the city port-a-potty in a citizen's yard and I would like to know how much it would cost for me to rent it because I have an event in November, and I would like to rent it.

Ms. Jannie Lathan said I agree with all of the citizen comments, and I applaud the citizens of Darlington for coming out and staying involved in our local government. She said I also want to acknowledge our city manager. I think you have been doing an excellent job. Ms. Lathan said the form of government that we have is primarily a strong city manager form of government. It requires somebody to work eight hours a day full-time. It doesn't require a part-time Mayor and I'm glad that the majority of the citizens rejected this idea of a strong mayor. With that being said, our city manager has recommended for months that the mayor and council approve in the budget …and it's documented in the workshop meetings for the budget …for them …. She can only approve up to $5,000. She has brought before this mayor and council on numerous occasions to purchase a new trash truck. They have refused to allow her to do that so tonight I am begging our mayor and council to give our city manager approval to purchase a new, not a used trash truck. I would encourage our mayor and city Council to continue to work with our city manager. A special meeting / workshop meeting was called just last week. I would like a written definition for what a special meeting is and for what a workshop meeting is because in that meeting, although this town has spent over $750,000 of public money to purchase the land that we never had the approved and required access to in terms of the right-of-way. Now they are selling that land in a special meeting that was called where no one from the public …none of us attended. I ask you to go online and look at that meeting you won't see one of us no citizens

here that land was sold to one of the city council family members approximately $885, so I'm asking for more transparency here. She said the Municipal association clearly defines what a working session is. You don't vote in working sessions, you work things out which you used to do and then you bring it back before full council with all of us here, so we know what you're voting on. Ms. Lathan said, "I also asked you to go back and have the complete viewing of that video because it cuts off when you guys get ready to go into executive session. Also, it's my understanding that our city manager brought a proposal to use that land to do a solar farm and work with Duke Energy that would reduce all of our electricity bills, but there's been no discussion of that. Ms. Lathan said, "I asked that we please, please support our city manager and hopefully she can address some of this in her minutes. Councilman Gardner said, "Ms. Lathan would you mind doing me a favor and tell me about the meeting where we discussed the purchase of a new trash truck." Ms. Lathan said, "yes, I will give you that. Ms. Lathan said what I would ask you to do is to go back to your work session that you may or may not be in because it was discussed in your work session to purchase a new trash truck. Mayor Boyd said we're not here for discussion and he cut it off.

Boards & Commission Appointments (None)

Unfinished Business

Old Business Bids for Street Cuts - Michael Morris

Councilman Gardner made a motion to approve Evans Paving Services for $7,935 for the listed thirteen cuts to be re-asphalted. Councilwoman McRavin seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, Segars, Reed, Baccus and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

New Business

Discuss Providing Sewer Service on Asbury Street - Michael Morris

Mr. Morris said, "I need council's permission to sign the construction permit. He said the developer came in two years ago to request that we would accept the sewer. They are building eleven houses on that street. They are laying their own sewer lines which are connected to ours because ours does not go to the end of the street. Mr. Morris said we will service four of the houses with water and sewer because our lines are there. The others are in the county. Mr. Morris said they asked them about annexing into the city but since they are so far along with their partners and everything. Mr. Morris said they just want us to sign the slip saying we will accept the sewage from those houses. Mayor Boyd asked Mr. Morris questions about …. Councilman Milling said, they will be receiving water from Darlington County Water Authority, and they want sewer from us. Councilman Milling said, "I think they shouldn't have sent you. I think they ought to come and make a request to the Council. Mr. Morris said, "apparently, they requested it, and it was approved by someone. Councilman Milling said if somebody can find where council has approved that. Mr. Morris said in the talks with the developer I was given the construction permit last week, and I took it to Ms. Hawkins, and she said we needed to bring it to council. Councilwoman Baccus asked Mr. Morris about a house on Asbury Street whether it was in the city or county. Mr. Morris didn't know, and Councilwoman Baccus asked Mr. Morris how he was bringing this when he doesn't know what's in and what's out. Mr. Morris said that's

a spotty area. City and county are intermixed in that area. Mayor Boyd said one of them called him today and asked about the incentives and I told him the incentives that we have for building houses, and he was saying that they would possibly build them in the county. If he builds in the county, he will not get an incentive. He didn't say 100% but it was almost like he felt like he could go ahead and annex into the city. Mr. Morris said apparently, they met today and for whatever reason because their engineering fees they already paid to the county didn't want to make the transition. Mayor Boyd said if the possibility is there for them to annex into the city I feel like they should annex into the city to get sewer. Mayor Boyd said we need to table this until next time and then we'll get more details about it if everybody is fine with that.

Discussion and Possible Bids for Outsourcing Trash Pickup - Lucas Reed

Mayor Boyd said, just for clarity what I'm asking for here so the public understands, and council understands is that I am not against buying a used truck; I'm not against buying a new truck; I'm not against servicing our trucks and fixing the old trucks and finding out whether or not it can be subbed out. What I'm asking for so that way that as a council can provide the best service and the best price without going up on fees. He said down the road things are going to go up whether we sub it out or don't sub it out. Eventually, things are going to go up, but the goal is to try to get it to where we don't have to and get it to where there is no delay on trash. Mayor Boyd said, correct me if I'm wrong Lucas, but the trash truck is not down. The truck that is down is the recycling truck. Mr. Reed said the truck that is down is the residential truck. We are currently using the recycling / commercial truck to pick up residential trash. Mr. Reed said he has two proposals. One for purchasing a new truck, and he is going off the price that we had for a few months back when we had the opportunity to buy a truck from Velocity. Mayor Boyd said there was a trash truck that we missed because we were told last month that we did not have the funds to be able to get it. It was proposed to us, but the council did not turn that down. We were told we could not financially get that truck. My understanding is that truck has been sold and to get a new truck is there a possibility without having to wait a year …. Is there another way to look to see if someone else maybe has a truck that's new that they didn't want and they turned back in like the last one? Mr. Reed said, "We can keep looking and hope and pray that someone may turn down a truck, but those options are few and far between. That one that we had literally dropped in our laps … the last one for $224,000 the next day the salesman called to find out if we were going to get it because if not somebody else will buy it. Mayor Boyd said, just for clarity so the public knows the council did not turn that down. The council was told we did not have the funds. Ms. Hawkins said, "May I clarify. We could not go out and put it on debt. She said according to our CPA we did not have enough debt service remaining. We were at our level for debt." Mayor Boyd said, "We could not purchase the truck for debt or cash or anything of that nature." Ms. Hawkins said, "I did not say that I said, for debt. Mayor Boyd said you did not offer that last month that we could purchase it for cash. Council didn't turn it down. Councilman Gardner said, "The only time the trash truck was brought up, was when we said we were not going to hire a City Planner and use that salary for purchasing a trash truck. He said that was the only time we ever had a trash truck brought to our attention. Ms. Hawkins said, multiple times I have said before this body that we needed a trash truck within the limitations and boundaries of your financial situation, we were not able to do it the way I had hoped to do it. During the workshops with the budget, it was my hope that at the end of the year and I think I

explained this to you if we kept the planning and economic development low (about $75,000) that would be about $180,000 that should have been left over however I was cautioned by the CPA to please do not make a rash decision and purchase it if you are unsure where the city would be at June 30, 2025. And because they were spending all over the organization, I couldn't make that in fairness and say, without a doubt, we would not be over budget if we purchased the $224,000. At that time, there was a truck put to us in the spring, but the spending as I have alluded to, exceeded the budget. Councilman Gardner said We have a quote here for the repair of one of our trash trucks from January 3, 2025. Was that ever brought to Council? Ms. Hawkins said, no, it was not, but you were told about it. Councilman Gardner said, we went from three trucks down to two trucks in January and we had a quote to fix it, but we never brought it to council. Now we have two out of three trucks and within the last 45 days we're down to one truck. One truck has a repair bill of $31,000 and the other has a repair bill of $29,000. I'm interested in exploring new trucks. The used 2022 truck that has 20,000 miles on it for $170,000. He said, "even if we go that route, we need to repair some of our older trucks and have them as back up. Mr. Reed said they purchased the Timmons truck as a backup truck. Councilwoman Reed said, "As I said in our last meeting, all of this information …. I don't want to keep going over this. To get our citizens the service we need, we need a new truck because to repair this it's going to take some time. get a truck that's functional. Councilwoman Reed said, Lucas, you are the department head. It is time now this is not new that we have been having service interrupted, people complaining. The only solution is that we need another one. Why are we wasting all of this time, let's just do it. Councilman Milling said, "We haven't been provided with the money to do it. Councilwoman Reed said, "She said at the last meeting she gave us that. She gave us what we could do and what did we say … We went back, we came to this meeting to make that decision and during the week council asked for a lot of information to support whatever they wanted, but we still need the services. Councilman Milling said, "We need the services but let's get Ms. Hawkins tell us how she can do it. Ms. Hawkins said, "I would like to add a statement as to why my recommendation was not to fix truck two. She said truck two is over seven years old, and it has holes in the body, and the hydraulics are gone. She said the TWS was told to me to be in excellent condition, and that we bought it at a good price and that it could run. Based on that I feel the city should move to being on a schedule where they are replacing rolling stock on a schedule, so we are not putting money in 7, 8 and worn-out equipment. That was the reasoning behind that because I feel like if you just spent $45,000 on a truck that was already used and it was told to me $35,000 on the truck that's sitting, why not come up with a plan to get a new truck but I was afforded that we could not do it based on our limitations in debt. When I gave you all the draft of the capital improvement plan, no one gave me any comments on that and on that document, I did tell you that there was $224,000 in the capital improvement fund. I gave it to you in writing. Even if I did not do that objectively please forgive me. I'm not trying to keep anything from you, but it's like trying to put a puzzle together to get this done and I am basing it on what was told to me that that truck would take just for the hydraulics $35,000 and it's already seven years. It's past its lifetime. In my first few days, my first couple of months, I felt like that was not the way to go because I feel this department needs to regularly get new stuff. They told me they get old stuff all the time. I want it to get a work truck and a new sanitation truck. As Mr. Reed suggested on more than one occasion, if we were to take in all of commercial including dumpsters, there's a pathway to get that with the money we

have in our budget - $375,000 for commercial dumpsters only. Ms. Hawkins said, there's different things and different parts to this. I need you all to understand it's not just residential, it's multiple things that this Department handles on our behalf, and what I'm saying to you is there's different ways to approach it as well. We just can't issue any debt. Ms. Hawkins said, I've also explained that we could put back what we got from selling the trucks. She said, "We don't have the money sitting there and don't give them what they need is all I'm saying. Now how we get there. We can put our minds together to get there, if you are willing to do so, but I didn't think that was the way to go to repair a truck that was already past its lifetime. Ms. Hawkins said I apologize if you feel like I've left anything out. That has never been my intent. I have said since April we need a new truck. We need a truck, but we can't extend debt, so we'd have to do it through cash. Mayor Boyd said, "To verify, last month you turned us down on the truck because we didn't have the debt, but it was not brought up that we had the cash to buy it, so it was turned down. You are now asking us …last week to buy a truck seven years old from Florida but now you are stating that the truck that is eight years old has outlasted its lifetime so we're going to buy another truck that's seven years old. The truck from TWS was a used truck and when you buy anything used, it works, it's clean, and when you drive it off the lot it's yours. He runs a clean service out there and provided a good truck that lasted for a while and for some reason it had its time of day. Again, what we're asking for is which way is best to go. I still would like to see the cost analysis for it being subbed out like the commercial trucks are subbed out. If you look at buying a truck, fixing a truck, but if you buy a brand-new truck…. I'm all for buying a brand-new truck. It's one year down the road before you can buy the truck. Ms. Hawkins said, running hours versus years are different. These trucks idle. There's a differentiation based on how it's used, and some of these trucks are leased, and from what I understand they may not have an "almost everyday use." Councilman Segars said, "One of the repair bills is for a seized-up engine because the truck ran without any oil in it. What's going to happen to the new truck if they don't put oil in it? He said it sounds like we have a maintenance problem as much as we do with old used vehicles. Mr. Lucas Reed said, "CDL drivers know they are required to do a pre-check every morning, but unless I'm physically there holding their hands and making them do it, I have to go by them and write it on the sheet that they checked it." Mr. Reed said the driver has that sheet already and every CDL driver knows it is a requirement. He said federal guidelines say they must do a pre-trip every morning and a post trip at the end of every shift. Councilman Gardner said I also know my street is littered with hydraulic fuel oil and whatever else. I also know that metal can be welded, so if we have holes in the garbage truck, that can be welded. Mr. Reed said that's included in the Amick truck. Councilwoman Baccus said if I understand correctly, the back of one of the trucks was opening. Mayor Boyd reminded Councilwoman Baccus that Councilman Gardner was still talking. Councilman Gardner said, "Last week you told us we had how much in cash? Ms. Hawkins said $224,000. She said it's on the capital improvements draft that I gave you all four weeks ago and no one seems to remember that. There was discussion among council about the capital improvement fund. I told them (Pridgen) that the Street & Sanitation Capital fund was set up years ago and it's charged on the water and sewer bill and that money is transferred from the water and sewer account into the street and sanitation capital fund every month. Ms. Hawkins said, "I have been told, I don't know how true it is that you did have a capital fund for the general fund, but those funds were used to improve a property not far from here. Councilman Gardner said, City manager lets not put things that you

don’t know how true and then say it in the middle of a meeting just doesn’t seem appropriate. Ms. Hawkins said, “I agree with you that it is not appropriate, and I retract my statement. Councilwoman Baccus asked, “So, you’re saying that … is it possible Lucas or City Manager that a new truck can be purchased in less then a year”? Ms. Hawkins said, “Anything is possible. She said there were two trucks in less than six months that were offered to the city. Councilwoman McRavin said, “So if we at this point make a plan to go ahead and purchase a new truck, how can this operation continue in a timely manner. Mr. Reed said, “My recommendation is that until we get a new truck, suspend recycling. I’ve instructed the employees to go ahead and pick up every can they see and dump it. Mr. Reed this only be until we get a second truck. Once we get a second truck we will go back to normal operations. Mr. Reed said it is costing the city on average approximately $35,000 a year. Mayor Boyd asked Lucas approximately how much a new truck is. Mr. Reed said, “A brand-new truck will cost right at $250,000. Mr. Reed said we were able to luck up for that one that Velocity had for $124,000. Ms. Hawkins said it was $224,000 and Amick had one for $225,000 earlier this year. Mr. Reed said for a brand-new truck … unless we get one that another company rejects. If we were to build a truck and spec it out to our desires, we are looking at $250,000. Mayor Boyd said $250,000 for a new truck which would take three months to six months to a year option, 2022 model with 20,000 miles for $180,000 and option three is to fix one truck for $29,000 and another truck for $31,000 so to fix both trucks it will cost roughly $60,000. Mayor Boyd asked Ms. Hawkins if she sent out asking for proposals and she said she did. Ms. Hawkins said two declined and the other two did not send it in by 5:00 PM this evening. Mayor Boyd wanted to know if the two said they said they were going to send us a bid. Ms. Hawkins said, “I spoke to Mr. Dennis Timmons personally and I asked him to send one, but I didn't get it. One business owner said they did not have a base here in our market. One emailed me and said the time limit was too short of a time for them to contact their leadership to put together a proposal and I did think that I would get one from one of our current providers, but I did not. Ms. Hawkins said she also contacted a provider out of Marion. Councilman Gardner said he was talking to the Mayor of Hartsville over the weekend, and he said the city manager helped us out with a garbage truck and asked if he is still helping us. Mr. Reed said, “No sir that was taken back. Councilman Milling asked Lucas what other pieces of equipment he has in the street & sanitation department. Lucas said we currently have the two cherry pickers, the street sweeper, the hotbox and …. Councilman Milling asked what kind of shape those things are in. Lucas said both cherry pickers are at the end of their life span. Councilwoman McRavin said it looks like you have a clear-cut path to continue to pick up trash in a timely manner by simply suspending recycling for a few weeks. We can go ahead and place this order for a new trash truck that we can hopefully have within the next six months. She said our city manager has provided us with a plan to get new equipment rolling stock basis so by the time these funds are replenished you will be able to get a new cherry picker or whatever this other truck is. Councilwoman McRavin said, I'm not in favor of outsourcing our trash pickup. We have employees and sanitation workers on staff here and we are asking or hopeful that industry will come into our community. We need to lead by example and if we are outsourcing how can we expect another industry to come in and invest in our community when we are not investing in our community. There are lives and livelihoods and people who have salaries and depend on those positions. She said we’ve already lost Canfor; we’ve lost Hardees, a Dollar General and our own technology company have packed up and

moved to Florence. Councilwoman McRavin said we can build two thousand houses here in Darlington but if people don't have a place to work, they can't afford the house. So, I don't want to outsource any of our services. She said Our mayor was very adamant earlier this year when we were talking ... and it was mentioned about outsourcing water. I can't see us outsourcing our sanitation at this point when we have a path to do that. I want to do all we can to maintain the services that we have. maintain the employees that we have to keep our people employed. Keep our residents in our city … keep their services going fluently and do the very best that we can. Unfortunately, we don't have funds, and our debt ratio is way above because of some extreme purchases that have our money tied up. I'm not in favor of outsourcing and laying our own residents off. I agree we need this new trash truck, and I'd like to see us move forward with the plan that you have proposed for spending. Mayor Boyd said, thank you Ms. McRavin, but since you put words in my mouth, that wasn't true …I asked Council to recuse themselves from comments, laughs and remarks and be professional. If you outsource it, the outsource is an opportunity to look at. And if you outsource it, the people that I've talked to that are willing to bid on it said that they would hire those people. So put it out to the trash people, the workers, the employees out here that I'm trying to cut your job. No, I'm not trying to cut your job. I am looking for options. One option that you're proposing is that we take $230,000 that we have in the fund to buy a $250,000 truck with the plans of hoping to be able to sell the other trucks to be able to come up with enough money to buy a brand new $250,000 truck and it's going to probably take a minimum of 3 to 6 months to get while we still run one trash truck. He said council just needs to decide but don't put words in my mouth that I'm asking to terminate any employees. that has nothing to do with the ballfields. That has nothing to do with other companies coming into our town or leaving our town. Councilman Milling said we are currently outsourcing dumpsters. Councilman Gardner said in 2017 we bought two garbage trucks, and we brought two cherry pickers, and we need to make sure we're managing our fleet and putting oil in our vehicles. Council members continued to discuss whether to repair or replace them and the time it would take to get them back up and running. Mr. Reed said his recommendation is to purchase the truck for $180,000. He said they would have to go to Florida to get it, but they could have the truck here by Monday or Tuesday. Councilwoman Baccus asked Kendrick to explain to her the condition of the trucks. She said if we put another $60,000 into these trucks will the trucks hold up. Kendrick said he wouldn't put money in the 2011 truck because it is way past its lifespan. Kendrick was answering questions that Councilwoman Baccus asked about the truck repairs. (Council members speaking at the same time. Mayor Boyd said no one on council wants to fix a truck and have a truck out there that somebody is going to get hurt on. Councilman Gardner said six months ago our administration said the truck was good to buy. Kendrick Holloman said we didn't know the engine was in that shape. Councilwoman McRavin asked Lucas how they would get the truck. He said they would drive to Florida to pick it up and drive it back. Councilwoman McRavin had questions and concerns about driving the truck back and putting the miles on it versus us having it shipped to us. Councilman Milling asked if we've looked at lease purchase. Ms. Hawkins said we can't do it because it is a debt instrument. Milling said in the past I thought we used lease purchase as a way of avoiding some of our financial constraints. Ms. Hawkins said I did reach out to our CPA, and she advised that we cannot issue debt. Councilman Gardner asked why the information is changing. Ms. Hawkins said because GASB changes and that's why I'm not in the finance seat.

The changes on what a municipality can do and what they have to count have changed. Ms. Hawkins said I can have her write something up and get it to you all to explain that. Council continued a very lengthy discussion about the truck going over the best way to move forward) Councilman Milling asked Lucas what his recommendation was. Lucas said his recommendation is to fix both trucks plus the purchase of a used truck. Councilman Gardner said to move forward with the two repairs. We'll have a meeting in two weeks and delve into the financial accounts. Councilwoman Reed said she's for purchasing the truck and doing the repairs. Councilwoman Baccus said if there's $240,000 in the fund and the truck is only $180,000, you're not depleting the fund. Councilwoman Reed suggested that we purchase the lightly used truck**. Councilwoman McRavin made a motion to purchase the used 2022 Mac truck for $179,900 with the intent that we get this truck delivered to us. Councilwoman Baccus seconded the motion. Councilpersons Gardner, Milling, Segars and Mayor Boyd voted "No." Councilwoman Reed voted "Yes." Motion Failed.**

Councilman Gardner made a motion to approve Amick Equipment to repair the Freightliner garbage truck for $31,204.96. Councilman Segars seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, McRavin and Mayor Boyd voted "Yes." Councilwomen Reed and Baccus voted "No." Motion Passes.

Councilman Gardner made a motion to approve the quote from Pee Dee Fleet for $28,880. This is a 2011 truck. (Argument between Councilwoman Reed and Gardner) Mayor called to order and apologized to the citizens. Councilman Milling said something was mentioned about trying to find out who could help us out on a temporary basis. We've got one truck running and we've got one truck we just approved Amick to repair. Mayor Boyd said Davis texted me today and said they would be willing to help. What they can do, I don't know. Councilman Milling said we will meet again in two weeks. If we can get the information before that we can have a call meeting and try to get back together. I hate to put $30,000 into the truck without an engine. If we can put $30,000 into getting some temporary service while we look to see what else, we can do. Then we'll have two trucks running. And if we've got two trucks running, plus Davis helping, we might be in a position where we are without an interruption in service. Councilman Milling said, I'm trying to keep some money in the kitty while continuing to provide service and that's the reason I am not going to vote to fix the failure of the no engine truck. Mayor Boyd said he thinks it's worth fixing. **Councilman Gardner said he would withdraw his motion and wait two weeks and get more education on some options.**

<u>First Reading of Ordinance 2025-05 Amending Business License Ordinance</u>
Councilman Gardner made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-05 Amending Business License Ordinance. Councilman Milling seconded the motion. Councilpersons McRavin, Segars, Reed, Baccus and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

<u>Vote to Hire Assistant Judge - City Attorney Kevin Etheridge</u>
Mr. Etheridge provided Council with a copy of the resume for Ms. Mariana White who applied for the position. He said she works as a public defender, and she would also be our first female Judge. Mr. Etheridge said a month or month and a half ago Judge Stucks called him and said

Judge James was stepping down, so they needed to fill this position. Mr. Etheridge said he and Judge Stucks both decided that Mariana would be the best candidate. He said this is not a situation where you would have to do a publication in the newspaper, this is just something that requires a vote. He said it doesn't have to be a citizen that lives in Darlington. He said she would have to go to judges' school, and she understood all of that. Whatever Mark's terms were she would go along with that as well. Mr. Etheridge said he is not sure if Mr. James' term was two or four years. He said as a council, you all can do either two years or four years.
Councilman Gardner made a motion to appoint Ms. Mariana White as the Assistant Judge to fill the unexpired term of Mr. James. Councilwoman Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, McRavin, Segars, Baccus and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

City Manager's Report – City Manager Hawkins

Ms. Hawkins said due to the lengthy time of this meeting, I will forgo any comments at this time. She said to lift the McCray family in your prayers at their time of bereavement.

Reminders

Tuesday, September 16, 2025, Council work session at 6:00 PM
Saturday, September 27, 2025, 10 AM Public Forum at Harmon Baldwin Recreation Center, 300 Sanders St.

Adjournment

Upon motion of Councilman Gardner, seconded by Councilman Milling, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM. All approved the motion to adjourn the meeting.

_____
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Clerk & Treasurer