CITY OF DARLINGTON

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD IN THE OLD COUNCIL CHAMBERS

400 PEARL STREET, DARLINGTON, SC 29532

APRIL 7, 2026, 6:00 PM

Present: Mayor Boyd, Councilpersons Shelia Baccus, Angela McRavin, John Milling, John Segars, Elaine Reed, and Bryant Gardner. Also, present were Interim City Manager Ronnie Ward, Gloria Pridgen, Hunter Thomas, Steve Abbott, Sean Odom, Anna DeWitt, Dyan Cohen, Angie Campbell, Wynona Flynn, Krista Hartley, Ernestine Lyde, Clarence Chapman, Boyd Jackson, Nancy Matthews, Fire Chief Pat Cavanaugh, & Assistant Fire Chief Charles Bailey, Lee Andrews, Pam Johnson, Rose Pruitt, Regina Denham, Dannie McClellan, and other citizens.

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

Approval of Minutes

Councilman Bryant Gardner made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting on Tuesday March 3, 2026. Councilwoman Angela McRavin seconded the motion. Councilpersons Milling, Segars, Reed, Baccus and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

Councilman John Milling made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special City Council Meeting/ Work Session on Tuesday March 17, 2026, at 6:00 PM. Councilwoman Elaine Reed seconded the motion. Councilpersons McRavin, Segars, Baccus, Gardner and Mayor Boyd voted in favor of the motion.

Citizens Wishing to Appear Before Council

Citizens may speak for up to 5 minutes. Maximum of 30 total minutes for public comments. (***Neither personal attacks nor disruptive behavior are allowed. Please sign in to be heard at this time.)***

Mrs. Dannie McClellan

Mrs. McClellan said this is my support system over here. I'm going to tell you right now; I'm probably going to start crying. Good evening, Mayor Boyd and council members, my name is Dannie McClellan, and I've been a resident of Darlington my entire life. I'm homegrown, from homegrown, from homegrown, from homegrown. On March 12th, my husband and I experienced the

homeowner's worst nightmare. Imagine being stranded on a ship in the middle of the ocean and receiving a call that your property is on fire and realizing there is absolutely nothing you can do. The only reason I'm not standing here totally mourning the total loss of our home is because of Chief Pat Cavanaugh and the Darlington Fire Department. Their speed and skills were the only thing standing between the flames in our home. Beyond their technical expertise, the men showed extraordinary kindness towards our daughter, Angie Campbell as she stood by hopelessly watching her childhood home in danger. They just didn't fight a fire, they cared for her and they treated her like family. For that, we were eternally grateful. Finally, we rely on these individuals to be our shield during our darkest hours. I was concerned to learn that they had not received a raise. I just hope you will consider giving them a raise this year. Just because you never know who's going to need them next. And I would just like to thank them and all of you for the Fire Department. Mayor Boyd said they are always doing a great job. I appreciate their efforts and support.

Wynona Flynn

Ms. Flynn said I'm here on behalf of myself about the water department, about the water bills, about the situation in my area, about the streeting, and the construction that they're doing over there, which is raising my water bill, and I have concerns about that. Mayor Boyd asked what's your concern about in your area? Ms. Flynn said 207 Avenue D Darlington South Carolina, the city of Darlington. Councilwoman Reed asked is it your concerned about the cost. Ms. Flynn said my bill went from $108 to $1,596 in one month. They said that I had to change the pipes under my house because I had old pipes because I have got an old house. My house is not brand new. My house has been there for years. I changed the pipes under my house, which cost me $5,000 but my bill is still $1,456.65. Councilwoman Reed asked for the amount. Ms. Flynn said $1,456.65 in one month. Mayor Boyd said If you will write your number there, Mr. Ward will call you and make sure we get it straight. Councilwoman Baccus asked have you discussed this with the water department or anything? Ms. Flynn said Yes, I have. And still, I got a bill on Friday of last week for the same amount. It hasn't gone down. So, I came to pay my bill on Monday, and they told me I had to get it adjusted again. I already had it adjusted and I'm paying $365 for two weeks on the 4th and on the 30th. Mayor Boyd said Mr. Ward will pull it up and contact you to make sure we get it straight for you.

Regina Denham

Ms. Denham said I was here last month. I feel like I wasted my time. I have gotten nowhere with it. Being assaulted by a police officer for no reason at all inside the judge's chambers. They all know what happened because they came in 5 minutes later wanting to take me to lunch. Now I can't seem to get anybody to hold the court accountable, but the court seems to want to hold everybody else accountable. I've got a complaint form here that I filled out that Mr. Davis gave me. I had to come up and get another one and I just want to leave these copies for y'all to read. The complaint forms the policies concerning the complaint form and his letter they do not coincide. They are like

two magnets working against each other. They don't match. So, I'm asking for his resignation. And I'm also asking for the hospital bills to be covered for the 10 days stay illegally in the detention center when I was denied medical attention. I was denied water for three days. I was there illegally. They all know it. The officer that did assault me, she is willing to testify that she did it and why she did it. She was a manipulator. Every single officer and every single person that has been involved with what's been going on with me is no longer here. They have either been fired or they have resigned. And I'm standing here. I am a citizen. I don't deserve what's happened to me. I don't have a job because of the city of Darlington. I was assaulted on my job. In 2023 at Pizza Hut by a manager, and I didn't know why. It all stemmed from the weekend before when I was illegally arrested in Florence. I didn't know what was going on. I had no idea what was even going on because I am innocent. And when I came up here to find out about all these tickets that keep getting written and dismissed and written and dismissed, it's all because of the lead investigator over some drugs. They know what they've done and that's why they're trying to hold me down. I'm tired of it. I'm three years into this with nothing. I was staying with my disabled mother and taking care of my mother when I was illegally arrested and taken away from her for 10 days. Then after that I was illegally evicted from my house. I had to go into the hospital for three days because I broke my ribs inside that jail. I wasn't even supposed to be there. I shouldn't have even been there. The police officer that took me knows that he knows good and well, it was all illegal and it was all in retaliation. I have been being retaliated against by this lead investigator for three years because I got dirt on him. Ms. Denham said that I don't think that people need to be called chief of police or lead investigators when they want to. The chief of police told me he couldn't do anything about my complaint, and I asked him why. He said because he couldn't do anything about it. He hung up on me. I came up here to get him to sign my form for why he was dismissing my case. He wouldn't even come out. He wouldn't even talk to me. But here is the complaint form, and here is his letter. I'm sure that once you read it, hopefully it will sicken you as much as it sickened me. But these hospital bills just that alone total about $2,000. I need to be compensated for at least for that because the law in South Carolina says that I could be compensated up to $1,000 per hour that I spent illegally in that jail. And I want some kind of compensation today. I can't go on anymore. The last meeting I came to when I left here without a dime in my pocket because my mother died last July. I've got a water bill in her name for $1,500. They came and cut my water off. Then my power got turned off. I spent a week with no power, no water, no food. I can't keep doing this. You were all supposed to be here to help people, not hurt them. Ms. Denham said that I haven't done anything to deserve the treatment that I have gotten. She said that I will be 63 in June. This all started when I turned 60. I've never had problems with the law. I am not a criminal. I can't even work because the day that I called them to come to Pizza Hut when I was assaulted, I was written a no trespass warrant and the person that assaulted me got to stay on her job. Mayor Boyd asked, “do you have a phone number. Ms. Denham said Yes, sir, I do now. Mayor Boyd said Mr. Ward will give you a call. Ms. Denham said well, last time we did this, I had to go chase the attorney down….. Ms. Denham said that they won't put the

water bill in my name for some reason because they think that I'm going to pay this. I can't pay that. My mother was dependent on me physically and I was dependent on her financially. Ms. Denham said she took every bit of her Social Security check to pay these outrageous bills. Ms. Denham information was taken.

Mr. Boyd Jackson

Good afternoon, I am here again about this water situation. I keep paying these bills for this water and I'm not really getting the satisfaction I think I deserve for paying. Keeps coming out with that brown color for some reason and what I can't understand is that the place where the water comes from the tower on Pine Street. The guys are there just about every day I don't know what they're doing up in there, but I do know something needs to be done. If I'm a customer paying this then I think I should be getting satisfaction with it. Another thing is about this we talk about beautification of Darlington. The Codes Department, do they actually go around and look at these dilapidated buildings or buildings that are burned, been burned out for two or three years and they're still just standing there making the neighborhood look kind of like not what it should be. The last thing I would like to know about is the last couple of months here you guys said that you sold some property that was on 151. I was wondering if we were short of a garbage truck I wanted to know did, we make enough money from that sale to pay for another garbage truck. Mayor Boyd said that money can't be used for a garbage truck because it is hospitality money. Mr. Jackson said so all that money went to the hospitality. Mr. Jackson asked did the money that you paid for the land that came out of hospitality as well. ..... Mayor Boyd asked for his address. Mayor Boyd said we will get the Water Department to check on that. Mr. Jackson said I appreciate it. Mayor Boyd thanked Mr. Jackson. Councilwoman Baccus said the lift station that's on Pine Street when was the last time you've seen all that brown rust in the street? Mr. Jackson said I don't see that anymore it comes directly into the house. Councilwoman Baccus said it's just coming through your lines now. Mr. Jackson said yes.

Sean Odom

Mr. Odom said good evening, Council I see on here that y'all got old business up here to purchase two benches. Is that going to come out of the beautification line item and where are they going? For my suggestion, they should go down there with B. A. Gary at the pool, or they should go down here by Walmart or IGA because there's foot traffic. And also, does this council have subpoena power? Or does this council have the authority to call the investigation hearing? Because if you do with that lady's complaint, you need to call an investigation hearing or you need to subpoena the chief of police to get to the bottom of this stuff. And then you continually have people coming up here talking about the water. Do we have a water and sewer director? If we don't, we need to find one and we need to get down to this business with this water. Because if it was your family, your children have

to drink it or bathe in it, you would want something done. Let's get it done. Mayor Boyd thanked Sean.

Ernestine Lyde

Ms. Lyde said my complaint is still about the water department. The water is still brown. I've been calling and its now April. I have been calling ever since last year for them to come and at least try to blow .....I have the thing that they put on my line because it's a dead-end street. I'm on Flynn Circle. It's a dead-end street. So, they put the thing that comes and flushes the water. They were doing it fine when it first started. Now, there is nobody coming. I have called. Every time I call, they say they're putting an order in. Nobody is coming. The water is still brown. My white clothes are starting to be brown looking, and it shouldn't be. It shouldn't be that. We shouldn't have to keep going through this with the water department. And what she's talking about, my mother lives on Avenue B. There was a water line that was busted the other day. Just this week, I saw the line that was busted. So, a lot of this stuff, these lines and stuff need to be replaced. They are old. They need to be replaced. Instead of us doing some things, let's start taking care of people. Clean water, we are all entitled to that. We all are. Please do something about it. We keep coming to the city council. You keep getting our names .....the same thing. It's time for a change. Mayor Boyd thanked Ms. Lyde.

OLD BUSINESS

Purchase of 2 Park Benches – Mayor Boyd

Mayor Boyd said I have asked to purchase two benches on Cashua Street. He said one in front of Vaughan Insurance and one in front of High Cotton up on the square. We got them all around the other parts of the square. Mayor Boyd said I think Mr. Milling had asked about trying to go and look at the brick sidewalks..... Councilwoman Baccus said if we're going to purchase benches, we need to purchase four benches. She said because down South Main Street has more foot traffic walking back and forth, citizens walking to IGA or wherever downtown they are going, as well as to Walmart. Councilwoman Baccus said if you're going to purchase benches, they need to be in the area where we have foot traffic. She said I don't know about Cashua Street. I ride through there and I don't see anybody walking up and down Cashua Street constantly. But I see citizens walking up and down South Main Street constantly. So why would we want to buy a bench to put in front of a citizen's business, seem to me the citizens should be able to purchase their own bench. Councilwoman Baccus and Mayor Boyd talking between each other..... Councilwoman Baccus said that benches should be in any area where there is a lot of foot traffic. Councilwoman Baccus said at the special illegal special meeting we had the big issue was we don't want benches we only want to purchase two benches only for one side of town Cashua Street which has very little foot traffic compared to Highway 52 and South Main Street. I don't have an objection to buying two

benches on Cashua Street, that's fine, but I still think we need to put two on South Main for those citizens that's walking. Mayor Boyd said just to correct the issue as I had asked before instead of just stating stuff that's incorrect, we didn't have an illegal meeting so to verify that there was no illegal meeting. He said there was a special meeting in workshop session. Mayor Boyd said as we stated last time, you know, constantly bring up a conflict. I said, if you'd like to have two benches down there, I'm for that. He said I have no problem with that. I asked for two benches. If you would like to have two benches, there is foot traffic on Cashua Street. There are benches in front of other residents and other businesses all around the square. There are no benches on that side. There is one further down on Cashua Street. Mayor Boyd said the benches are purchased by the city that we put around the square. All the benches that are around the square that are in front of other businesses are our benches purchased by the city. Councilwoman Reed said seemingly there is a discussion about it, I don't know if I have voiced this before, but I asked about where the bus stops are. I know they are on South Main Street in front of the …. We need to put a bench there that would seem to be appropriate and on South Main Street. Councilman Gardner said in front of IGA. Councilwoman Reed said No, well, IGA is fine, but I thought they had something out there. But I'm talking about further down. What's the name of the housing? Councilwoman Reed said because one of the residents from Pecan Grove brought one of their lawn chairs and put there. So, this would be a great effort from the city to go ahead and purchase two more. I know that would be a perfect place to put a bench. Council continued the discussion of the benches and contacting SCDOT on regulations of placement. Councilwoman Reed said I know that would be one. Motioned by Councilman Gardner to approve the purchase of four benches, two on Cashua Street and two on Highway 52, one at Pecan Grove apartments and one at the laundromat. Seconded by Councilwoman Reed. All in favor.

PURCHASE OF BATTING CAGES – LEE ANDREWS

Mr. Andrews stated the County Council had voted to approve the cost of 60% of the batting cages, leaving 40% for the city to pay. The total cost of the batting cages is $25,814.36. Motioned by Councilwomen Reed to approve 40% of the cost of the batting cages, seconded by Councilman Gardner. All in favor.

STREET PROGRAM APPLICATION – DYAN COHEN

Ms. Cohen stated that the application is ready and the only thing missing is a letter of support from the Council. She said that this application is going to be entry level, which is the "Friends" level and the next level is a much more involved process. She said this is to get us up and running so we can learn the best practices, attend the trainings. Its mandatory to attend four training a year. However, there is free registration for the members now. She said that this is to build local capacity to support and sustain the program. Ms. Cohen said the letter being passed around that you recognize the

value of a vibrant Main Street district, that you pledge to allocate staff time, resources and policy support to ensure the program's success.

New Business

1. **Pee Dee Coalition Proclamation for Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Awareness Month – Pam Johnson and Christal Altidor.**

Mayor Boyd read allowed the Proclamation for Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Awareness month.

2. **Funding to Upgrade Website to Meet Federal Regulations – Hunter Thomas**

Mr. Thomas explained to council that something had been brought to his attention for our company that does our website. A little over a year from now, our website will be essentially illegal because the United States Department of Justice is asking municipal governments to make their websites more accessible to people who use accessibility tools. So, in order to fix this, we need to migrate to a newer system, and they need to help us fix everything. So, to put it in perspective, I think it's about 255 of our 500 pages are not up to par. I'm not really asking for this money tonight. It is not a budgeted item right now. It is $15,000, but it would be great if we could approve to use this company.

That way I can start working towards this and launch it in July. It's about a nine-to-10-week project, I believe. So, we don't want to drag our feet for sure. We want to jump on this and have it done way before April 2027. Motioned by Councilman Milling to approve the contract and the first payment on July 1st in the new budget year of $15,000 with Beam and Hinge to make us compliant with current Justice Department regulations. Seconded by Councilman Gardner. All in favor.

3. Greater Darlington Chamber of Commerce Funding Request for Freedom Fest – Krista Hartley

Ms. Krista Hartlyey with the Darlington Chamber of Commerce stated that she was there respectfully to ask for $22,000 for the firework drone show for Freedom Fest that will be held the Saturday before July 4th. Motioned by Councilwoman Reed to a approve $22,000 for the firework drone show. Seconded by Councilman Gardner. All in favor.

Motioned by Councilman Gardner to go into executive session at 7:08 PM. Motion seconded by Councilman Milling. All voted in favor of the motion.

Executive Session

In accordance with S.C. Code 30-4-70

(2) Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements 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 of a claim. (Update on contracts for Retail Spaces on Public Square and Purchase of property) ***(The council may act following executive session)***

A motion was made by Councilman Milling to come out of Executive Session at 7:51 PM. Seconded by Councilman Gardner. All voted in favor of the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 PM by Councilman Milling. Seconded by Councilwoman McRavin. All voted in favor of the motion.

_____, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____

Cheryl Dubose, Assistant Clerk and Treasurer

_____

Lacie Weatherford, Secretary