

August 29, 2016

JOINT MEETING  
DARLINGTON COUNTY'S MUNICIPAL COUNCILS,  
COUNTY COUNCIL, BOARD OF EDUCATION, &  
LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION  
DARLINGTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

The City of Hartsville hosted the joint dinner meeting of Darlington County's Municipal Councils, County Council, Board of Education, and Legislative Delegation on August 29, 2016, at 6 p.m., at Lawton Park Pavilion, 716 Prestwood Drive, Hartsville, South Carolina.

NOTICE OF MEETING

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda, giving the date, time, and place of the meeting was posted on the bulletin board in the County Administrator's Office and mailed in advance to Darlington County's Municipal Mayors/Managers/Clerks, Darlington County School District Superintendent, Darlington County Board of Education Chairman, Darlington County Legislative Delegation, Darlington County Council members, and the local newspapers.

COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Bobby Hudson, Chaplain Dannie Douglas, Jr., Mr. David Coker, Mr. Marvin Le Flowers, Mrs. Wilhelmina P. Johnson, and Mr. Robert L. Kilgo, Jr.

COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Vice Chairman Robbin Brock and Ms. Mozella Nicholson.

ALSO PRESENT

Interim County Administrator Marion Charles Stewart, III, Clerk to Council J. JaNet Bishop, Darlington County Economic Development Director Frank Willis, Darlington County Board Of Education Members Connell Delanie, Billy Baldwin, Maureen Thomas, Jamie Morphis, Warren Jeffords, and Wanda Hassler, Darlington County Superintendent of Education Eddie Ingram, Darlington County School District Public Information Officer Audrey Childers, City of Darlington Mayor Gloria Hines, City of Darlington Administrator Howard Garland, City of Darlington Council Members John Segars, Coleman Cannon, Sr., Elaine Reed, Carolyn Bruce, and Bryant Gardner, City of Darlington Clerk Gloria Pridgen, City of Hartsville Council Members Adlena Graham, Teresa Mack, Bob Braddock, Billy Shirley, and Johnny Andrews, City of Hartsville Mayor Mel Pennington, City of Hartsville Manager Natalie Zeigler, City of Hartsville Clerk Sherron Skipper, Society Hill Council Member Deborah Harrell, Senator Gerald Malloy, Representatives Jay Lucas and Robert Williams, and Sheriff Elect Tony Chavis.

REPORTERS PRESENT

Ms. Samantha Lyles of the News and Press.

### Welcome / Invocation

Hartsville Mayor Mel Pennington presented the welcome and Hartsville Councilman Billy Shirley presented the invocation.

During dinner, entertainment was provided by Forte Productions.

### Business Builder Program

Mr. Brian Forte, of Forte Productions, talked about how the Business Builder Program, Start-Up Hartsville Challenge Program, and the community helped transform his dream/ideas into a business venture. He and his mother, Wanda Forte, will open Mezzoforte Restaurant and Playhouse in October. This upscale dining and live performance venue will be located on Carolina Avenue across from Wells Fargo Bank. The Fortes won the People's Choice Award of \$2,000 in the Start-Up Hartsville Competition.

### Items From The Floor

Darlington County Council Chairman Bobby Hudson introduced Interim County Administrator Charles Stewart and other County Councilmembers and staff present at the meeting. He mentioned the possibility for economic growth in the county by the end of the year, the courthouse construction project, and the need for a penny sales tax. Chairman Hudson congratulated the City of Hartsville on its award and thanked the delegation for its support.

Darlington City Mayor Gloria Hines pledged her support of a penny sales tax for the courthouse construction project. She mentioned the new businesses in Darlington to include the Southeastern Grain Company (under new management), the South of Pearl Restaurant located behind Kistler Funeral Home, Sweet Jane's Restaurant located on the Square, and an ice cream parlor and two new businesses (behind McDonald's) coming soon. Mayor Hines said the City was working to get a new hotel and recreation complex. She commended the new Wal-Mart and introduced city representatives present at the meeting.

Society Hill Councilwoman Deborah Harrell mentioned that the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem were unable to attend the meeting. She reported that the Town of Society Hill was not in the red anymore. All assessments had been paid. She talked about the renovation of the Depot, the Town Council's consideration of a mitigation plan, the Town's first annual fireworks festival held the latter part of July, the need to clean up abandoned property, and the need for funds to assist with revitalizing Church Street. Ms. Harrell announced that vendor applications were being accepted for Society Hill Catfish Festival scheduled for the first Saturday in November.

Board of Education Chairman Connell Delaine commended the upgrade of school buses, student cost increase, and the district's sports program. He commented that at the end of every year, at least one of the district's sports program is at a championship. Mr. Delaine introduced School Board/School District representatives present at the meeting.

Superintendent of Education Eddie Ingram commended the efforts that will allow for every child in Darlington County School District to receive a device (Mac Books for high school students and tablets for kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> grade). He briefly talked about implementing testing programs online, the number of students in the district (10,162), renovation of the gym at Mayo Magnet High

School, the record setting \$22.9 million in scholarships with Mayo students leading with \$8 million, and the Stem program where 6<sup>th</sup> graders will begin their digital footprint/resume in a data base that colleges, universities, technical schools, and workplaces will pay an annual fee to access to recruit students. Dr. Ingram thanked the delegation for support which provided for fifteen 4k classrooms throughout the district and the district's first summer food program held at five locations that served approximately 12,000 lunches and 8,000 breakfasts this past summer.

Representative Jay Lucas recognized Sheriff Elect Tony Chavis and Interim County Administrator Charles Stewart. He thanked Representative Robert Williams and Senator Gerald Malloy for their work and support and everyone for their service. He also congratulated the City of Hartsville on its award.

Senator Gerald Malloy mentioned that Darlington County was represented by three State Senators and six members of the South Carolina House of Representatives with at least three of the delegation members residing in the local area. The highlights of his presentation included the water problem in Lamar being ratified soon, the need for each entity to prioritize projects, funds for body cameras for law enforcement agencies, the Gun Committee scheduled to hold hearings in October, the need for the county and the municipalities to share information and work together on projects/grants, and how the delegation get funds/grants approved at the state level.

Superintendent Ingram talked about Darlington and Hartsville High Schools being members of TransformSC's, an education initiative of the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness transforming the public education system so that every student graduate is prepared for careers, college and citizenship.

Senator Malloy also talked about the need for some of the 23 schools in the county to be closed and the need for the School Board and County Council to discuss and prioritize construction of new schools and/or a new courthouse. He congratulated the City of Hartsville on their award and encouraged the municipalities to share resources with the smaller communities.

Representative Robert Williams thanked the delegation for their work. He encouraged everyone to communicate and work together.

Economic Development Director Frank Willis mentioned the possibility for economic development in Darlington County within the next six to eight months.

Mayor Pennington commended the awards the City of Hartsville received and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

County Councilwoman Wilhelmina Johnson reported that after 28 years of service, she would be leaving County Council. However, there was still work to be done. She talked about CRC (Darlington County Cultural Realism Complex) being in existence for 44 years with five historical centers in Darlington. Mrs. Johnson concluded by mentioning the need for monitors on school buses and the needs regarding the environment and the roads.

There being no further comments, Mayor Pennington announced that the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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J. JaNet Bishop  
Clerk to Council

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Bobby Hudson, Chairman  
Darlington County Council

Approved at meeting of September 19, 2016.