

SPECIAL MEETING
DARLINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL
DARLINGTON, SC

JUNE 29, 2015

A special meeting of the County Council of Darlington County was held this 29th day of June 2015, at 5 p.m., at the Darlington County Courthouse Annex/EMS Building, 1625 Harry Byrd Highway, Darlington, 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 mailed in advance to the local newspapers, persons requesting notification, and posted on the bulletin board at the entrance to the County Administrator's Office and the Darlington County Courthouse Annex/EMS Building.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Bobby Hudson, Vice Chairman Robbin Brock, Chaplain Dannie Douglas, Jr., Mr. David Coker, and Mrs. Wilhelmina P. Johnson.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Marvin Le Flowers, Ms. Mozella "Pennie" Nicholson, and Mr. Robert L. Kilgo, Jr.

ALSO PRESENT

County Administrator Terence Arrington, Clerk to Council J. JaNet Bishop, Environmental Services Director Renee Howle, Recycling Coordinator Paula Newton, Economic Development Director Frank Willis, Elections/Voter Registration Director Hoyt Campbell, Codes Enforcement Director Randy Evans, Interim Finance Director Sherman Dibble, Hartsville Mayor Mel Pennington, Hartsville City Manager Natalie Zeigler, Darlington Mayor Tony Watkins, Darlington City Administrator Howard Garland, Sheriff Wayne Byrd, Chief Deputy Sheriff James Hudson, and others.

REPORTERS PRESENT

Mr. Jim Faile of the Messenger and Ms. Samantha Lyles of the News and Press.

Call To Order

Chairman Hudson called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

Discussion - Ordinance No. 15-20, An Ordinance To Amend Darlington County Code Of Ordinances, Chapter 2 (Administration), Article V. (Finance), Division 7 (Fees), To Add A Section Establishing The County's Fee Schedule And The Effective Date Of This Ordinance

MOTION was made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Coker to discuss Ordinance No. 15-20.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Coker stated that it was brought to his attention that the municipalities were unaware of the fee (\$38.50 per ton) for yard debris as included in the Ordinance. He felt that Council needed to look at the fee structure in an effort to eliminate it.

Mr. Douglas stated that Council should drop the \$38.50 per ton fee for yard debris because they were already paying county taxes.

Mr. Brock agreed that the \$38.50 per ton fee for yard debris should be deleted from the ordinance.

Mrs. Johnson stated that she would go along with whatever was being done. However, the matter needed to be carried over to be discussed further.

MOTION was made by Mr. Brock and seconded by Mrs. Johnson to accept the fee schedule, except for the yard debris fee for the municipalities (the City of Hartsville and the City of Darlington) and South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT).

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Arrington pointed out that any adjustments made at this point would probably require a budget amendment because of the financial projections on the revenue side. He provided a packet of information containing an overview of the activities that took place up to this point.

Ms. Howle stated that in reviewing the budget from last year, the staff needs to make it more specific. Last year's ordinance contained a \$53 waste disposal fee. Of the \$53 fee, \$48 was for residential solid waste, \$4 for electronic waste, and \$1 for capital service. She understood that the residents in the cities, as well as residents in the county, were paying the \$53 for disposal. The \$50.75 per ton was being paid to Lee County for MSW (municipal solid waste). Ms. Howle stated that the ordinance needs to make it clear as to what each fee covers. She explained that all solid waste go to Lee County and yard debris stays in the county's Class 2 landfill.

Ms. Howle recommended that if the county does not charge for yard debris to be processed and covered at the county landfill, then the county could charge a processing fee as done in other counties. Comparative fees for other counties were provided to Council members and briefly discussed. Ms. Howle said the yard debris fee was suggested in order to help the landfill get out of the black and to address capital improvement needs. She also pointed out that electronic waste (e-waste) disposal has cost the county a lot of money. The City of Darlington has a vendor to pick up their e-waste and the City of Hartsville charges \$11.50 per piece for electronics to be taken to the county's recycling stations. Therefore, the county has increased its e-waste fee. She recommended including more specifics in the ordinance for yard debris.

Mr. Coker asked whether the other counties that were compared charged an annual fee such as the county's \$53 fee.

Ms. Howle indicated that the other counties were charging a per ton fee for every item and no annual fee. The County's \$53 was for all residential waste, to include e-waste, solid waste, yard debris, etc.

Mr. Coker pointed out that it was hard to compare Darlington County to the other counties because they were set up structurally different.

Mrs. Johnson requested that bins be placed in the rural areas quarterly. She said everyone was paying the \$53 and the county needed to make some provisions for people in the rural areas to dispose of their waste.

Ms. Howle stated that placing bins in areas would cause contamination.

Mr. Coker clarified that the county has recycling centers for people to dispose of their garbage. However, Mrs. Johnson felt that there were many areas without solid waste collection centers.

Mr. Douglas stated that it was not fair to charge the cities \$38.50 per ton for yard debris when they were paying the \$53 annual fee.

Mr. Arrington suggested scheduling a site visit so that Council members could see the condition of the landfill. He talked about ongoing capital needs at the landfill; the recommendation of the former Interim County Administrator to outsource the landfill to a private investor; the staff trying to implement strategies to stabilize the Environmental Services fund and operate the landfill; the possibility of incremental increases; and people dumping at no cost and the county eating the cost to operate the landfill.

Mr. Arrington explained that it was miscommunicated that the \$53 annual fee covered everyone's use of the landfill. Commercial businesses, the School District, South Carolina Department of Transportation, etc. had not been paying to utilize the landfill. Yet, the county has ongoing capital needs. He stated that in order to stabilize and operate the landfill efficiently, at some point, Council would need to consider a strategy. He deferred to Council as to what Council would like to do.

Mr. Coker asked how much the \$53 annual fee would need to be increased to cover the \$38.50 per ton. He felt that Council needed options before making a decision.

Chairman Hudson said Council needed to put into play Mr. Brock's suggestion regarding the contractors dumping and give that time to work. He suggested that this be revisited in six months.

Mr. Arrington said the staff would come back with a budget amendment to incorporate the deletion of the revenue projection.

Mrs. Johnson stated that the county was outsourcing to Lee County in order to save space in the county's landfill.

Mr. Arrington reminded Council that it recently cost the county approximately \$75,000 to repair one piece of equipment at the landfill, and the fees are a means to stabilize the Environmental Services Fund.

Mr. Brock questioned and Ms. Howle explained the budgetary information provided to Council. He stated that according to the information, the county would lose \$70,000.

Vote For Executive Session - Discussion Of Personnel Matters

The executive session was not needed.

Adjournment

MOTION was made by Mr. Brock and seconded by Mrs. Johnson to adjourn the meeting. There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. JaNet Bishop
Clerk to Council

Bobby Hudson, Chairman
Darlington County Council

Approved at meeting of July 6, 2015.