

SPECIAL MEETING
DARLINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL
DARLINGTON, SC

NOVEMBER 12, 2014

A special meeting of the County Council of Darlington County was held November 12, 2014, at 5 p.m., in the Meeting Room at the Darlington Library, 204 North Main Street, Darlington, South Carolina.

NOTICE OF MEETING

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, a meeting notice, 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.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Wesley Blackwell, Vice Chairman Mozella Nicholson, Chaplain Dannie Douglas, Jr., Mr. Marvin Le Flowers, Mr. Robbin Brock, Mr. Bobby Hudson, Mrs. Wilhelmina P. Johnson, and Mr. Robert L. Kilgo, Jr.

ALSO PRESENT

Interim County Administrator Thomas W. Edwards, Jr., Clerk to Council J. JaNet Bishop, Finance Director Perry Strickland, Codes Enforcement Director Randy Evans, Library Director Jimmie Epling, Sheriff Wayne Byrd, Economic Development Director Frank Willis, Recreation Director Ken McRae, Interim Historical Commission Director Kay Williamson, and others.

REPORTERS PRESENT

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

Call To Order Invocation / Pledge Of Allegiance

Chairman Blackwell called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Mr. Douglas presented the invocation and Mr. Brock led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ordinances

Ordinance No. 14-20, An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 14-02, FY14/15 General Fund Budget, To Amend The Appropriations From The General Fund And Establish The Effective Date Of This Ordinance - **SECOND READING** (Initiated by the staff)

MOTION was made by Mr. Kilgo and seconded by Mr. Douglas to approve second reading of Ordinance No. 14-20.

The motion carried with Mr. Hudson opposing.

Ordinance No. 14-22, An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 14-07, FY14/15 Development Partnership Fund Budget, To Close The Development Partnership Fund Budget - **BY TITLE ONLY - FIRST READING** (Initiated by the staff)

Chairman Blackwell read the title of Ordinance No. 14-22 for First Reading.

Ordinance No. 14-23, An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 14-06, FY14/15 County Fire District Fund Budget, To Reduce Funds For The Lease Purchase – **BY TITLE ONLY - FIRST READING** (Initiated by the staff)

Chairman Blackwell read the title of Ordinance No. 14-23 for First Reading.

Ordinance No. 14-24, An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 14-02, FY14/15 General Fund Budget, To Remove Accommodations Tax Funds From The General Fund Budget And Place Into A Newly Established Fund For Accommodations Tax – **BY TITLE ONLY - FIRST READING** (Initiated by the staff)

Chairman Blackwell read the title of Ordinance No. 14-24 for First Reading.

Ordinance No. 14-25, An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 14-02, FY14/15 General Fund Budget, To Include Bond Payments And Interest For FY14/15 – **BY TITLE ONLY- FIRST READING** (Initiated by the staff)

Chairman Blackwell read the title of Ordinance No. 14-25 for First Reading.

Ordinance No. 14-26, An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 14-02, FY14/15 General Fund Budget, To Create An Asset Account For Accommodations Tax And To Remove Accommodations Tax Funds From The Fund Balance Account – **BY TITLE ONLY - FIRST READING** (Initiated by the staff)

Chairman Blackwell read the title of Ordinance No. 14-26 for First Reading.

Ordinance No. 14-27, An Ordinance To Establish A Countywide Business Registration Fee - **BY TITLE ONLY - FIRST READING** (Initiated by Councilman Kilgo)

Chairman Blackwell read the title of Ordinance No. 14-27 for First Reading.

Other Items

Schedule Special Meeting For Monday, December 8, 2014

It was the consensus of Council to schedule a Special Meeting for December 8, 2014, at 8:30 a.m., in the Meeting Room of Darlington Library to recap information from the Planning Retreat and receive a consent of Council on the budget and finances of the county.

Gift To County Employees

MOTION was made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Kilgo to provide funds to give each employee a turkey (approximately \$12 each) for the holiday on behalf of County Council and the Darlington County Taxpayers.

The motion carried with Mrs. Johnson opposing. Mrs. Johnson suggested that Council pay for the employees' guests attending the Employee Appreciation Banquet in lieu of giving them a turkey.

Recap From Council's Retreat

Mr. Edwards briefly recapped the financial information that was presented at Council's Planning Retreat. He encouraged Council to discuss options to be placed in a plan on December 8, 2014.

Mr. Edwards reviewed the revenue adjustments and revenue projections for FY15/16. He suggested efforts to collect more delinquent and EMS fees, the appropriation of the first \$25,000 in Accommodations Tax funds to the General Fund, implementation of a business registration fee, development of a plan to increase delinquent tax fees, and implementation of a fee for municipal prisoners.

Mrs. Johnson presented concerns about parcels in the county not being identified in the Tax Assessor's Office.

Mr. Edwards also suggested that someone do revenue enhancement, mailings, billings, and follow-up to collect more delinquent fees. He discussed and proposed developing a program to register businesses.

Mr. Kilgo clarified that a business registration fee would not be a license based upon gross revenue, but a fee for operating a business. He suggested a \$100 registration fee for each business. Mr. Kilgo felt that the combination of a business ~~license fee~~ and a business registration fee would generate a substantial amount of money. → *personal property tax*

As amended, Dec. 1, 2014

Mr. Kilgo asked the staff to prepare a hospitality tax ordinance for Council's consideration. This would impose a two percent tax on the sale of prepared food sold at businesses in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Mr. Edwards and Council members talked about proposed revenue sources to include revenue from municipal prisoners and a county recreation fee. Ms. Nicholson talked about the need to better promote the availability of Lake Darpo in order to receive more revenue from it.

After discussing the Prison Farm, Mr. Edward suggested that Council request the staff to obtain an expert to conduct a cost benefit analysis and study. He also suggested a wage/classification plan for the employees and for someone to look at the organization structure because there were too many people reporting to the County Administrator. He encouraged Council to set goals and standards for the new County Administrator to accomplish which should address inefficiencies.

Mr. Edwards suggested that Council develop a plan to be implemented on December 8, 2014. A majority of the Council members expressed consent for Mr. Edwards to proceed with his proposal.

Mr. Edwards briefly talked about funding for capital equipment replacement.

Chairman Blackwell asked whether Council would conceptually consider Mr. Edwards' proposal as presented, which Council would go forward with on December 8th.

MOTION was made by Mr. Kilgo and seconded by Mr. Brock to conceptually endorse Mr. Edwards' proposal as presented.

The **MOTION** was amended by Mr. Kilgo and seconded by Mr. Brock to change the motion from *conceptually endorse* to *adopt* the proposal so that Mr. Edwards could begin implementation. As for the Prison Farm, the next step would be to have someone provide a cost benefit analysis.

The motion carried with Ms. Nicholson and Mr. Hudson opposing and Mrs. Johnson abstaining.

Adjournment

MOTION was made by Mr. Kilgo to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. JaNet Bishop
Clerk to Council

Wesley Blackwell, Chairman
Darlington County Council

Approved at meeting of December 1, 2014, *as amended on page 3. J. J. Bishop*

Respectfully submitted,

J. JaNet Bishop, Clerk to Council

Billy Baldwin, Chairman
Darlington County Council

Approved at meeting of _____, 2014.