

July 30, 2018

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 July 30, 2018, at 6 p.m., at EdVenture Museum, 146 West Carolina Avenue, South Carolina.

NOTICE OF MEETING

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda, providing 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

Mr. David Coker and Ms. Joyce W. Thomas.

COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Chairman Bobby Hudson, Vice Chairman Marvin Le Flowers, Chaplain Dannie Douglas, Jr., Mr. J. Lewis Brown, Ms. Mozella Nicholson, and Mr. Robert L. Kilgo, Jr.

ALSO PRESENT

County Administrator Marion Charles Stewart, III, Clerk to Council J. JaNet Bishop, Darlington County Board Of Education Members Jamie Morphis, Connell Delaine, Warren Jeffords, Charles Govan, Jr., Maureen Thomas, and Wanda Hassler, Darlington County School District Superintendent Tim Newman, City of Darlington Council Members John Segars, Elaine Reed, and Shelia Baccus, City of Darlington Administrator Howard Garland, City of Hartsville Council Members Bob Braddock, Johnny Andrews (Mayor Pro-Tem), Bernice Wilson, and Tre Gammage, City of Hartsville Mayor Mel Pennington, City of Hartsville Police Chief Jerry Thompson, City of Hartsville Clerk Sherron Skipper, Society Hill Mayor Tommy Bradshaw, Society Hill Town Clerk Brenda Nettles, Society Hill Council Member Carolyn Oliver, Lamar Mayor Darnell Byrd McPherson, Lamar Council Member Inez Lee and Angele White-Bradley, Representative Jay Lucas, Representative Robert Williams, Neptune Island Waterpark Operations Manager Eric Tucker, Nikki Williams of EdVenture, and others.

REPORTERS PRESENT

None.

Welcome / Invocation

Hartsville Mayor Mel Pennington welcomed everyone to the meeting. The invocation was presented by Hartsville Councilman Bernice Wilson.

Dinner Discussion

Neptune Island Waterpark

Mr. Erick Tucker, Operations Manager of Neptune Island Waterpark, briefly talked about his work experience and reported that over 40,000 people had visited the park since its opening this summer and all season passes had sold out. He invited everyone to visit the park. Neptune Island Waterpark General Manager was not present at the meeting.

Hartsville Mayor Pennington talked about the \$10 million water park and how many in the industry, such as Disney, Six Flags, etc. were looking at what a City of 8,000 has done with the water park. For this reason, the City has been able to recruit from Los Vegas, New York, Thailand, etc.

EdVenture Programming

Ms. Williams, a native of Hartsville, talked about there not being a lot to do in Hartsville when she was young. She went to EdVenture Columbia as an Afterschool Manager. From this experience and the support of donors, the school district, the City, etc., they were able to bring EdVenture to Hartville. Although EdVenture Hartsville has a much smaller audience than EdVenture Columbia, the Hartsville facility caters to younger kids (3 years old to 2nd grade) and has seen 100 people per day. Ms. Williams pointed out that EdVenture Hartsville is not just about exhibits, but a place of opportunity, outreach, and accessibility. EdVenture representatives will attend school, church, and community programs/festivals, undergo efforts to ensure affordable pricing for everyone, and sponsor various outreach programs such as a back to school event (school supply give-away).

Hartsville Mayor Pennington indicated that City Manager Natalie Zeigler could not attend the meeting. He talked about the concept of regionalism as it relates to the location of the waterpark. Mayor Pennington also talked about each agency doing a better job to help each other, and Hartsville's efforts to help Lamar with Screen on the Green.

The Edition

Hartsville Mayor Pennington briefly talked about The Edition at Hartsville Museum, a new upscale venue that complements the Museum. This rental space, located at 221 N. 5th Street, was created with collaboration between public and private organizations and funds.

Items From The Floor

Representative Jay Lucas announced that Representative Robert Williams was running for Congress and commended the efforts of Darlington County legislative delegation. He also reported that the delegation has been working with Darlington Racetrack to place

another \$50 million in their facilities. Representative Lucas urged everyone to work together.

Representative Robert Williams stated that the delegation was working to ensure the return of taxpayers' money regarding the nuclear project. He thanked Representative Lucas for his leadership in the House of Representative and throughout the State.

Board of Education Chairman Jamie Morphis reported that the school district has begun registering over 10,000 students for the Fall and will begin construction on the new Darlington school, followed by the school in Lamar and Hartsville. He talked about how the School District, the City of Hartsville, and Assisted Living worked together and shared resources to extend a road and, hopefully, get a traffic light in the future.

Superintendent of Education Tim Newman talked about the School District's efforts to get leadership motivated in working with students, families, and communities to create opportunities for all students.

Darlington City Administrator Howard Garland talked about the City's \$2.6 million Stormwater Project in southwestern Darlington, the purchase of a stormwater vac truck, the recruitment of two people to operate the stormwater vac truck and two people to work with the City's Beautification Program, the erection of new entrance signs (Lamar Highway, Highway 52, Highway 34, and Washington Street), the increase in millage (first increase in ten years) which should raise about \$110,000, the relocation of Carolina Bank from Darlington to Florence, the establishment of a Carolina Bank Branch facility at the corner of Orange Street and North Main Street, and several recent inquiries about restaurants locating on Highway 52 Bypass. He also mentioned Wal-Mart's success and the upcoming referendum for financing a courthouse facility. City Administrator Howard Garland commended the efforts of Darlington Police Chief Kevin Washington to promote 12 officers, the efforts of the City's Beautification Program, and the City's efforts to obtain grants for water/sewer infrastructure. Darlington City Mayor Gloria Hines and Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn Bruce were unable to attend the meeting.

County Administrator Charles Stewart pointed out that the upcoming referendum will determine how to possibly fund the courthouse project. Council will later make final decisions as to what, when, where, and how it will look. He commended the county's relationship with City Managers and School District officials. Mr. Stewart stated that he looks forward to opportunities to promote, support, and grow together.

Society Hill Mayor Tommy Bradshaw reported that solar farms will be locating in Darlington County. One solar farm will locate on the outer edge of Society Hill with a small portion within the town limits of Society Hill. He also mentioned planned improvements at the intersections of Highway 15, Highway 401, and Highway 52 and the opening of several Bed and Breakfasts in Society Hill.

Lamar Mayor Darnell McPherson briefly talked about the counties of Darlington, Williamsburg, Lee, and Bamberg having the highest incidences of cancer and the initiatives

of the South Carolina Cancer Alliance to promote cancer awareness. She mentioned the need for working sessions to talk about ordinances, codes, infrastructure, etc. Lamar Mayor McPherson also talked about the need for former students to invest in their community. She reported that Dr. Lewis Lynn, a graduate of Spaulding High School and member of Clemson University Board of Director, has connected Lamar Town Officials with Clemson University Department of Planning and Real Estate Development to assist Lamar with developing a short-range plan (three to five years) to include Main Street development, community development, affordable housing, etc.

Society Hill Councilmember Carolyn Oliver mentioned that during a recent visit to Darlington County Animal Shelter, she was told that the Shelter was out of cat food. Therefore, she asked everyone to please donate cat/dog food to the Animal Shelter.

Darlington County Board of Education Member Connell Delanie presented concerns about the need for entrance signs and clean entrances throughout the county, especially entering the county from Marlboro and Chesterfield Counties.

Mr. Stewart stated that several months ago, Councilwoman Joyce Thomas kicked off a project for entrance signs for the county. He also mentioned that the Galey and Lord property located at the entrance of Society Hill was privately owned, and the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) was involved in an effort to get the property cleaned and returned to an economic development asset to sell.

Mayor Pennington talked about the City of Hartsville removing its entrance signs in an effort to control the experience when traveling to Hartsville from Lee County/Bishopville since most people identify where the city begins by the green city limits signs. He said the City was not happy with all its boundaries and did not want people to know where the city limits are until those areas look better. Therefore, the city limits signs were being moved closer to the downtown area. Mayor Pennington suggested that the County strategically place the entrance signs to showcase the county.

Lamar Mayor McPherson requested help with organizing the business owners in the Town of Lamar. She also mentioned that Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce has recruited local businesses to help Lamar increase its visibility.

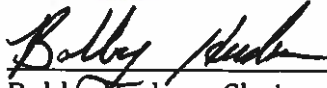
Darlington City Administrator Howard Garland mentioned the challenge to leverage those people traveling along the interstate to stop in Darlington County. He encouraged day destinations to sustain the towns.

Mayor Pennington thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged the Mayors, Managers/Administrators, and Chairmen to begin meeting again. There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



J. Janet Bishop
Clerk to Council



Bobby Hudson, Chairman
Darlington County Council

Approved at meeting of September 10, 2018.