

PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING  
DARLINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL  
DARLINGTON, SC

January 4, 2022

A public hearing and regular meeting of the County Council of Darlington County was held this 4<sup>th</sup> day of January 2022, at 6 p.m., at Hartsville Middle School Auditorium, 1427 Fourteenth Street, Hartsville, 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 emailed to the local newspapers, persons requesting notification, and posted on the county's website and bulletin board in the lobby of the courthouse.

A Notice of Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 21-10 was published in the News and Press on December 15, 2021, in the Morning News on December 16, 2021, and in the Hartsville Messenger on December 22, 2021.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Bobby Hudson, Vice Chairman Marvin Le Flowers, Chaplain Dannie Douglas, Jr., Mr. M. Kirk Askins, Mr. David Coker, Mr. Albert Davis, III, Mrs. Angie Stone Godbold, and Ms. Joyce W. Thomas.

ALSO PRESENT

County Administrator Marion Charles Stewart, III, Acting County Attorney Terence Quinn, Clerk to Council J. JaNet Bishop, Elections/Voter Registration Director Hoyt Campbell, E-911 Director Michelle Hall, Emergency Management Coordinator Molly Odom, EMS Director Kenny Bowen, Environmental Services Director Gary White, Finance Director Sherman Dibble, Fire District Chief Ricky Flowers, Library Director Jimmie Epling, Darlington County Board of Education Member Charles Govan, Florence-Darlington Technical College President Jermain Ford, and Darlington City Mayor Curtis Boyd.

REPORTERS PRESENT

Mr. Bobby Bryant of the News and Press.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Ordinance No. 21-10, An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 11-20 To Change (Reapportion) The Boundaries Of The County Council Districts Of The Darlington County Council As A Result Of The 2020 Census, To Establish The Separability And Severability Of This Ordinance, And To Establish The Effective Date Of This Ordinance - SECOND READING

Chairman Hudson declared the public hearing open at 6 p.m. to receive public comments on Ordinance No. 21-10.

Ms. Ruth Baronda, who resides in Council District 7, stated that she noticed a disparity/discrepancy in the census data regarding race and the voting age population. She talked about her previous work with the census and suggested that Council get citizens from Council District 7, the Planning Commission, or the Zoning Commission to fix the problems/move the lines so that District 7 would not lose any population.

Mr. Bill Segars, who resides in Council District 7, pointed out that Council's guidelines state that Council will not divide a community. However, the new council district line for District 7 goes through the heart of Kelleytown with one side of the road remaining in District 7 and the other side of the road being moved to District 4 - Lamar area. He stated that Kelleytown is 14 miles from Lamar with different interests. Mr. Segars asked Mr. Campbell to look at this matter and asked Council to follow its own guidelines and not divide a community.

Mr. Charles Govan, Darlington County School Board Member, stated that he was satisfied with the lines for Council District 6. As a member of the School Board, he feels that there should be equitable lines drawn to have representation across the board. He stated that there was poor turnout for the census across the nation and he does not like to see gerrymandering. He also stated that County Council was a fair representation of the county, however, it could be 4:4. He did not have a problem with the proposed lines, but if they are changed, he would like to be notified.

There being no further comments, Chairmen Hudson declared the public hearing closed.

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### Call to Order/ Election of Officers

Chairman. Attorney Quinn called the meeting to order and opened the floor for nominations for Chairman of County Council for 2022. Mr. Coker nominated Mr. Hudson and Mr. Davis seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, Attorney Quinn called for the vote.

The vote was unanimous to elect Mr. Hudson as Chairman of County Council for 2022.

Vice-Chairman. Attorney Quinn opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman of County Council for 2022. Mr. Coker nominated Mr. Flowers and Mr. Davis seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, Attorney Quinn called for the vote.

The vote was unanimous to elect Mr. Flowers as Vice Chairman of County Council for 2022.

Chaplain. Attorney Quinn opened the floor for nominations for Chaplain of County Council for 2022. Chairman Hudson nominated Mr. Douglas and Mr. Coker seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, Attorney Quinn called for the vote.

The vote was unanimous to elect Mr. Douglas as Chaplain of County Council for 2022.

#### Invocation / Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Douglas presented invocation and Mr. Flowers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Flowers recognized Darlington City Mayor Curtis Boyd who was in the audience and congratulated him on the City's water/sewer project. He also commended Representative Robert Williams and Senator Gerald Malloy who helped with making this project possible.

#### Citizens' Comments

Darlington City Mayor Curtis Boyd reported that the City of Darlington unanimously approved the Tree Board's recommendation for replacing the trees around the perimeter of the county courthouse. The 10 to 12-foot trees would include 13 Nelly Stevens Holly, seven Southern Sugar Maple, and two Willow Oak. The City had been looking to replace the Bradford Pear trees for over three years and agreed to purchase the trees for the county. He explained that the trees, as approved by City Council and the Tree Board, will blend with the Maple and Holly trees that have been approved for the new county courthouse. The Sugar Maple trees will provide shade and color, low maintenance, and reduce water backup issues in the City center. The Holly trees will be a beautiful evergreen year-round, and the Willow Oak trees on the two corners will match the other two current Oak trees. These trees will grow straight up, provide shading, and not branch out into the roadway. Their root systems will not destroy the concrete and will not grow larger than the current trees. Mayor Boyd also stated that replacing the current trees will require little disturbance of the area because the new trees will be planted in the same place as the current trees. No concrete will be removed and the electrical outlet at each tree will be disconnected and reconnected although some need to be replaced. He said the county would agree to replace the trees along with the City. He thanked Council for working with the City to replace the trees by the end of February, which would be the optimal time to ensure that the trees have the best chance to advance. Mayor Boyd reported that the City will be spending over \$190 million over the next 18 months to make Darlington a showcase. He was confident that the City of Darlington will be on board for joint ventures with the County.

Pastor Melissa Williams said she had contacted two County Council members and the County Administrator about the flags flying over Highway 151. She stated that she preaches love at her churches in Darlington County but has to explain the meaning of the flag to her child. She also talked about how these flags may affect economic development in the county and surrounding towns. The property is owned by one person and leased to the sons or daughters of the confederate who allows the flags to be flown. Pastor Williams said she was told that nothing could be done about this, but it could if time was taken to teach our citizens

to love and how to be a United States of America. She asked Council to think about what message this was sending to people and economic developers traveling through the county.

Personal Appearance - Dr. Jermain Ford, Florence-Darlington Technical College President – Introduction

Dr. Ford appeared before Council to introduce himself and to let the citizens know that Florence-Darlington Technical College was on the move by listening to businesses, economic developers, communities, k-12 partners, etc. He wants Florence-Darlington Tech to become the hub of all connectivity as it relates to economic and workforce development for good and sustainable jobs. He also wants to make sure that Florence-Darlington Tech is offering the right programs. Dr. Ford was meeting with all businesses and the county's Economic Development Director in order to be on the front line for business expansions and improvements.

Consent Agenda

Included in the Consent Agenda were the following:

- 7.A. Congratulation Letter From Senator Gerald Malloy RE: \$500,000 CDBG For Byrdtown Station Fire Truck
- 7.B. Marquee Sign on Corner Of Public Square
- 7.C. Letter from SC Association Of Counties RE: One-Time COVID-19 Disbursement Of Annual Service Fees Paid To SCAC
- 7.D. SC Association Of Counties Mid-Year Conference (Feb. 23rd) & Institute Of Government (Feb. 24-25)
- 7.E. Florence Area Transportation Study (FLATS) Policy Committee Public Hearing Meeting, January 24<sup>th</sup>

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Douglas to receive the Consent Agenda items as information.

The motion carried unanimously.

Florence Area Transportation Study (FLATS)

Chairman Hudson stated that Councilwoman Thomas had contacted him about serving on the FLATS Study Committee. Therefore, he wanted to appoint her to this committee.

**MOTION** made by Mr. Askins and seconded by Mrs. Godbold to appoint Ms. Thomas to the FLATS Study Committee.

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval Of Minutes – Minutes of Public Hearing and Regular Meeting, December 6, 2021

**MOTION** made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Ms. Thomas to approve the minutes of the public hearing and regular meeting held on December 6, 2021.

The motion carried unanimously.

## Ordinances

Ordinance No. 21-08, An Ordinance Authorizing (1) The Execution And Delivery Of A Fee In Lieu Of Tax And Incentive Agreement By And Between Darlington County, South Carolina (The "County") And Pee Dee Electric Cooperative, Inc., Acting For Itself, One Or More Affiliates, And/or Other Project Sponsors (Collectively, The "Company"), Pursuant To Which The County Shall Covenant To Accept Certain Negotiated Fees In Lieu Of Ad Valorem Taxes With Respect To The Establishment And/or Expansion Of Certain Facilities In The County (The "Project"); And (2) Other Matters Relating Thereto - CARRY OVER THIRD READING REQUESTED

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Douglas to carry over third reading of Ordinance No. 21-08 due to unforeseen circumstances.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ordinance No. 21-10, An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 11-20 To Change (Reapportion) The Boundaries Of The County Council Districts Of The Darlington County Council As A Result Of The 2020 Census, To Establish The Separability And Severability Of This Ordinance, And To Establish The Effective Date Of This Ordinance - SECOND READING

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Douglas to approve second reading of Ordinance No. 21-10.

The motion carried unanimously.

## Resolutions

Resolution No. 734, Commissioning William Winburn As A County Codes Enforcement Officer for The County Of Darlington

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Davis to approve Resolution No. 734 commissioning Mr. William Winburn as a County Codes Enforcement Officer.

Ms. Thomas asked about the criteria for the selection of this position.

Mr. Stewart explained that this was an employee position as a Darlington County Codes and Litter Control Officer. This position could not write tickets for littering without being commissioned. He also explained that the department head selected and went through interviews based upon the job description for County Codes Officer. This was not a new position, but a new person.

Mrs. Godbold said she noticed the last name and wanted to know the family relation.

Mr. Stewart stated that this was a 20-year ex-husband, and no nepotism was involved. The ex-wife works in Human Resources, and he will work in Codes Enforcement and will not answer to the ex-wife in any way. Since this was a 20-year divorce, it would not qualify under the county Nepotism Policy.

The motion carried with Ms. Thomas opposing.

## Committee Reports

There were no Committee Reports.

## Other Items

### Appointments to Boards/Commissions/Committees Due To Vacancies & Term Expirations As Of June 30, 2021

Mr. Flowers and Mr. Askins carried over their appointments.

**MOTION** made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Flowers to appoint Mr. Kenneth Kruger to the Airport Commission.

The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Krueger will fill an unexpired term through June 30, 2025.

### County Council 2022 Meeting Schedule

**MOTION** made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Askins to accept the proposed 2022 meeting schedule for County Council.

The motion carried unanimously.

### Courthouse Tree Proposal

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Coker to approve the Courthouse Tree Proposal.

Mrs. Godbold stated that Darlington City Council and the Tree Board approved the tree proposal. However, she wanted to know whether there was an expert opinion, whether a landscapist was involved, how this came about, and who chose/recommended the trees.

Mr. Stewart stated that since Mayor Boyd had left the meeting, he would present what he knew. He said Darlington City had been talking about this for some time; the Tree Board met and approved this; and the City was dealing with someone who had experience with running a nursery and dealing with trees. However, he did not know whether the City consulted a true landscape designer or experts. Past this, a request for information would have to be sent to the City because nothing else was submitted in writing for the agenda.

Mrs. Godbold pointed out that in the information Mayor Boyd presented to Council, he did not change the number of trees and where the trees would be placed. She explained that seven trees were plotted in the drawing, and one was plotted where there is concrete, but the Mayor stated that no concrete would be torn up. Therefore, this needed to be removed from the proposal and something else presented.

Mr. Stewart stated that after Mrs. Godbold brought this to his attention, he walked the site. The City had proposed to replace eight trees on the side of the Square, and there are currently eight Bradford Pear trees along that side of the Square. He called Darlington City Administrator who confirmed that it was not the City's intention to tear up the concrete in the corner. The way the trees were placed on the map made it look like a tree would go where there is concrete. Mr. Stewart said this was a verbal clarification, and he did not receive anything in writing. He also confirmed that tonight, Mayor Boyd stated they would not move any concrete, but this was not in the proposal.

**MOTION** made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Coker to carry over this matter so that Council could receive more information.

Mr. Flowers withdraw his motion and Mr. Coker withdraw his second to the motion.

Mr. Coker pointed out that the email from Darlington City Administrator John Payne states that the Tree Board and the Beautification Board were unable to meet because there was not a quorum. Therefore, since Mrs. Godbold has an issue, he would not have a problem with carrying this over so that the boards can meet with a quorum and finalize this. Then, he would not have an issue with approving this if they do not tear up the concrete.

Ms. Thomas stated that since the county was building a new judicial building, there needs to be a long-range plan for the current courthouse since it will be used later for other things.

Chairman Hudson stated that although the City had been dealing with this issue for several years, he agreed that they needed to go back, get a quorum, and go from there.

Mrs. Godbold said the City needed to go back and do its due diligence. The City has funds that will be used to create more funds that will be revenue for the City, which will also be taxpayers' money in her opinion. Taxpayers' dollars also pay for county resources such as manpower, employees, and equipment. Therefore, County Council should do its due diligence and get information from professionals/experts, a complete proposal, and a long-term plan.

Mr. Stewart requested clarification as to what Council wanted the City to bring back.

Chairman Hudson questioned whether this required the approval of the Beautification Board.

Mr. Douglas questioned whether the entire City Council was in favor of this proposal.

Mr. Coker thought that Darlington City Council had approved this. However, the Tree Committee and the Beautification Board did not have a quorum to meet.

It was Mr. Stewart's understanding that Darlington City Council and the Tree Board met and voted to do this. However, there was not a quorum when the Beautification Board and Tree Board meet.

Mrs. Godbold stated that she attended the City Council meeting when this matter was presented. The Tree Board had discussed this for a number of years, and she read all the meeting minutes regarding this matter. Darlington City Council asked the Tree Board and the Beautification Board to meet and discuss this. However, the Tree Board and City Council did not meet. She explained that members of City Council, the City Planner, and the Mayor also serve on these boards and there was not a quorum for them to meet. Part of the problem was that the seats that are available on these boards are not at capacity. There are two to three vacancies on each Board and only four or five people on each Board. If one person is absent, there is not a quorum. However, this was not the county's business. She also pointed out that this matter was considered during the holidays and at the last minute.

Chairman Hudson questioned whether the trees that will be removed belong to the county.

Mr. Stewart responded that the current trees belong to the county. It was his understanding that the Tree Board must approve the replacement of trees and the Beautification Board must approve the landscaping and design changes in the downtown area. Both Boards are subcommittees of Darlington City Council. He was under the impression that the Tree Board met and approve this. However, he had no proof. Mr. Stewart wanted to know what he needed to ask the City to provide for Council's reconsideration.

Chairman Hudson questioned whether the City has an ordinance that would allow this to move forward without approval from the Beautification Board.

Mr. Stewart indicated that he would present this question to the City.

Ms. Thomas wanted to do some research before making a decision.

Mr. Coker stated that the County would like to work with the City and support them in their decision, but the email from Darlington City Administrator leaves things up in the air. Council would like a consensus from everyone because there was dissension. He would vote yes on this matter once there is a quorum.

Mr. Stewart stated that he would ask the City for a clear request outlining their process for approval for replacing trees, a copy of their ordinance stating who is involved, and clarification on the map for replacement.

It was Mrs. Godbold's understanding that the City was going to a nursery to buy the trees, and the county would remove the current trees and plant the new trees with the nursery staff overseeing the county crew. She did not know the size of the new trees or the size and height they will grow to. Mrs. Godbold said a lot of money was involved and questioned whether the county would be committed to replanting and watering the trees. She also questioned whether there would be a guarantee on the trees and for what period of time. If any tree dies, who will replace them, and would this be an expense to the county.

Chairman Hudson stated that the county would not be responsible for the trees if they live or die.

Mr. Stewart stated that the concerns presented would be forwarded to the City.

The motion carried unanimously.

#### Request For Premium Pay For Palmetto Rural Fire Department From The County's American Rescue Plan Funds

**MOTION** made by Mrs. Godbold and seconded by Ms. Thomas to approve the request for premium pay for Palmetto Rural Fire Department from the county's American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds.

Mrs. Godbold explained that Ms. Thomas and she represent areas served by Palmetto Rural Fire Department. This Department serves 4,500 residents and businesses such as Fibers Industries, Diamond Hill Plywood, etc., and are dispatched from Darlington County E-911. She said there are concerns that if the county approves the \$25,000 for about 20 people at Palmetto Rural Fire Department, this would open things up for other entities to request American Rescue funds from the county. However, Palmetto Rural Fire Department was an extension of the services offered to residents and a justifiable request although they are not a part of Darlington County government. She said they have no other way to receive these funds if they do not request them from the county. Therefore, she was requesting Council's consideration to support this request. Mrs. Godbold also stated that the county would have a security blanket because Palmetto Rural Fire Department members are first responders for citizens in the county, dispatched through the county, dealt with the public during the pandemic, responded to over 500 calls, and the amount of money requested mirrors what was done for Darlington County Fire District.



Ms. Thomas stated that she had been in this area for 10 to 12 years and Palmetto Rural Fire Department does a tremendous job in the community and provides activities several times a month. She asked Council to be considerate of the request and the fact that there was no other fire station in the area served by Palmetto Rural Fire Department.

Mrs. Godbold added that Palmetto Rural Fire Department has served the area for 50 years.

Chairman Hudson asked whether Florence County has a similar independent situation such as Palmetto Rural Fire Department with its own tax base.

Mr. Stewart explained that Palmetto Rural Fire Department was an independent fire district established under the laws of South Carolina and authorized by the state legislators just like South Lynches Fire District in Florence County, and Florence County did not provide ARP funds for their independent fire district. He also pointed out that Palmetto Rural Fire Department operates its own non-emergency ambulance service within the fire department. Therefore, he did not know whether all the employees were firefighters or whether the county would provide ARP funds to the full-time employees who work with the non-emergency ambulance service. If Council approves this request, prior to issuing any money, the county will need the authority and must require detailed payroll records like those that the county has on all county employees who received ARP funds because Palmetto Rural Fire Department would not be responsible to the federal government for the application of these funds, the county was responsible to the federal government for the application of these funds. Palmetto Rural Fire Department was an independent taxing district and was not under the authority of the county.

Mr. Coker questioned whether the State should provide ARP funds to Palmetto Fire Department.

Mr. Stewart said this would be his thought. This would be just like the municipalities. They are independent and their service calls go through the county 911 system, but they received their allotment of money through the state. The state could certainly make sure that independent authorized fire districts and any other independent district authorized by the state, such as the Water and Sewer Authority, receive funds through the state.

Mr. Askins clarified that Palmetto Rural Fire Department employees are not paid by Darlington County but from the millage they collect.

Mr. Stewart confirmed that Palmetto Rural Fire Department employees are paid from the millage they levy that the county auditor places on the tax bill independently for them and from whatever money they make from their ambulance transport business.

Mr. Coker asked whether the county attorney had an opinion regarding this request.

Attorney Quinn stated that there was an application process for the ARP funds that were granted to Darlington County. Without looking at the application and the numbers used to justify the application, he could not provide an opinion tonight but would be glad to produce an opinion letter if Council wanted this issue back on the agenda at the next meeting.

Mr. Flowers called for the vote. Those voting in favor of the motion were Mrs. Godbold and Ms. Thomas. Opposing were Mr. Coker, Mr. Davis, Mr. Douglas, Chairman Hudson, Mr. Askins, and Mr. Flowers.

The motion failed.

County Financial Report/Audit For Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2021

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Coker to accept into the records, the county financial report/audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021.

Mrs. Godbold asked about the Internal Control Report referenced on page three of the audit document.

Mr. Stewart stated that the Internal Control Report was a secondary report that Council would receive later. The Internal Control Report was not the audited financial statement. Council was being asked to accept into the records the audited financial statement.

The motion carried unanimously.

2022 Holiday Schedule For Environmental Services Department

**MOTION** made by Mr. Douglas and seconded by Mr. Davis to accept the proposed 2022 holiday schedule for the Environmental Services Department.

The motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Update – Mr. Charles Stewart, County Administrator

Watershed Study Grant/Process. Mr. Stewart reported that the Office of Resiliency was still working with the Requests For Qualification for the watershed study. Next week, that office staff will meet with the three vendors who submitted a Request For Qualification. Once they vet the vendors for their qualifications, they will begin the bid process.

Courthouse Construction Timeline. Mr. Stewart also reported that the primary foundation framework for the courthouse was in place for the concrete to be poured. Then the primary pad that the foundation will set on will come together throughout February. There is the expectation that steel may be erected in March.

Former Wells Fargo Building. Mr. Stewart reported that fire restoration in the old Wells Fargo building had been completed and a contractor was looking at the bid process. He also reported that the staff received notification that another family court judge had been assigned to Darlington County, and the county has to provide office space for the judge and the judge's clerk/assistant. Since the county does not have two available offices in the current courthouse, two offices in the downstairs area of the old Wells Fargo building could be used temporarily until the new courthouse is completed. There will be available space in the new courthouse for this judge. Once the judge moves into the new courthouse, the county will then proceed with changes to the old Wells Fargo building.

Treasurer's Office Drive-Thru. Mr. Stewart reported that the Treasure Office serviced about 1,000 people last week at the drive-thru building. The staff was waiting for the mounting brackets to erect the Treasurer's Office Drive Thru sign on the side of the old Wells Fargo building. A flyer containing information and directions about the drive-thru was being inserted in every bill.

### Responses To The Administrator's Update

Ms. Thomas asked about family court traffic in the old Wells Fargo building.

Mr. Stewart replied that court would not be held and there would be no public traffic in the old Wells Fargo building. There would be office space only for the new family court judge. The new judge would work throughout the circuit (Darlington, Chesterfield, etc.), but the resident county provides the office space.

Mr. Davis stated that offices such as the Solicitor's Office should move to the new courthouse and not remain in the current facility.

Mr. Stewart said the Solicitor would have working office space in the new courthouse. There would not be enough space for the Solicitor's main office in the new facility.

Mr. Flowers talked about the need for the Solicitor's Office to have sight and sound separation from what would be taking place in the new courthouse. He added that justice would be better served with two different spaces.

Mr. Stewart said there was discussion about the Public Defender and the Solicitor being separate and having a "war room" office – office space during trials and separate general office space since there may be opposing situations.

### Requests / Comments – Members Of Council

Mr. Davis wished everyone a happy new year.

Mr. Coker pointed out that the lines for Council redistricting were not drawn by Council, but Council would approve them if they are fair. He wanted the City of Darlington to know that Council was not voting against the tree proposal, Council just needed clarification. If the information comes back and everything looks great, Council would be glad to vote yes. He commended Dr. Ford for his efforts at Florence-Darlington Technical College.

Mr. Flowers thanked Hartsville Middle School for hosting the County Council meeting and the county staff for making the transition smooth.

Mr. Douglas said the city and the county should work together. He just wants the job done right. He wished everyone a happy new year.

Mr. Askins said he would echo the comments about the city and the county. Local governments should work as partners when they can. He thanked the citizens for appearing to talk about redistricting. Mr. Askins hopes that Council will take into consideration the tight-knit community of Kelleytown.

Ms. Thomas questioned how to get Darlington County School Board more involved. She is looking forward to more progress in 2022 and thanked everyone for working together.

Mrs. Godbold wished everyone a happy new year and commended the feedback from the citizens regarding redistricting. She reiterated that she was in favor of helping Darlington City, although she opposed the nature in which the tree proposal was presented to Council

and there was no due diligence in providing Council with information to make a decision. Mrs. Godbold talked about timing in order to have continuity with the new plantings at the new courthouse. She felt that the opportunity to make a good impact was being missed. However, The City needs to have someone to develop a plan and clarify what happens if the trees do not live.

Chairman Hudson thanked everyone for attending the meeting and stated that Council has nothing to do with how the redistricting lines are drawn. However, Council would listen to concerns presented by the citizens. He commended the expertise and proposal presented by Elections/Voter Registration Director Hoyt Campbell.

An individual in the audience requested to comment. Mr. Davis asked Council to allow the individual to speak.

**MOTION** made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Flowers to allow the individual in the audience to address County Council.

The individual was concerned that Council did not respond to the comments/concerns made by Pastor Melissa Williams regarding the flags along Highway 151.

Chairman Hudson replied that Council does not respond, Council receives the comments as information.

Mr. Stewart added that, generally, Council receives the comments as information. If Council decides to do something, Council would instruct the staff and introduce something at another meeting. Council would not debate an issue or act immediately on items that were not already on the agenda. He asked Pastor Williams to give her contact information to the Clerk to Council. He will put together the information that was compiled several years ago when the matter came up. At that time, the staff was told that the county did not have jurisdiction to do anything about flags on private property. Mr. Stewart will also go through the process again to find out whether there was anything new or had changed and obtain an opinion letter from the county attorney.

Ms. Thomas stated that previously she had asked that a letter be sent to people who come before Council. The letter should thank the individuals for appearing and inform them that Council received their information. She asked whether this was a part of the minutes.

Mr. Stewart stated that he had spoken with Ms. Thomas about the letters being sent. He asked the Clerk to Council to obtain a copy of the letters that Attorney Cox sent the individuals who previously appeared before Council and forward them to Ms. Thomas.

Vote For Executive Session – (1) Discussion Of Negotiations Incident To Proposed Contractual Arrangements and (2) The Receipt Of Legal Advice Where The Legal Advice Relates To A Pending, Threatened, Or Potential Claim

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Davis to vote for executive session for the discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements

and the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim.

The motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session

**MOTION** made by Mr. Flowers and seconded by Mr. Davis for Council, the County Administrator, and the County Attorney to go into executive session after a five-minute recess.

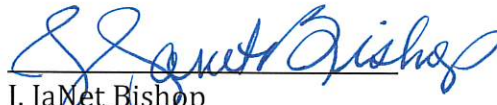
The motion carried unanimously.

Council recessed at 7:14 p.m. before going into executive session and reconvened at 7:49 p.m. Upon reconvening, Mr. Davis announced the death of Mr. Franklin Hines, owner of Hines Funeral Home in Hartsville and Lamar.


Adjournment

**MOTION** made by Mr. Davis to adjourn the meeting. There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



J. Janet Bishop  
Clerk to Council



Bobby Hudson, Chairman  
Darlington County Council

Approved at meeting of February 7, 2022.