

**Lamar Town Council Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2020**

Lamar Town Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Darnell Byrd-McPherson at 6:17 PM.

Invocation was given by Deacon Tim Dargan.

Roll call was taken by Mayor McPherson. Council Members in attendance were Mayor McPherson, Councilwoman Angele White-Bradley, and Councilwoman Mary Ann Mack. Councilwoman Inez B. Lee participated remotely via zoom call.

Others in attendance were Tim Dargan, Chief Carl Scott, and Elijha Enoch-Smith. Jannie Lathan and Doug Poston participated remotely via Zoom call.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mack that the agenda be accepted. Councilwoman Bradley seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilwoman White-Bradley to accept the minutes from the November 9, 2020 Lamar Town Council Meeting, Councilwoman Lee seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mayor McPherson opened the floor to fill the seat of mayor pro tem that was left vacant due to the resignation of former Councilman Lang Howell. Councilwoman Mack nominated Councilwoman Bradley; there was no other nominee. She was confirmed by affirmation. Councilwoman Bradley accepted the position of mayor pro tem.

Public Works Manager, Michael McDonald, submitted a written report for the Public Works Department. The report was read by Councilwoman Lee:

- Snowflakes have been installed on the light poles throughout the town.
- Duke Energy needs to be notified about poles that the town is no longer able to work on. (Councilwoman Lee Stated that she is currently working on this).
- Request that Duke leaves the power on South Railroad Avenue all year. (Mayor McPherson remarked that doing this may incur further cost, but we will follow up on it).
- The blue recycle bins are being removed from citizens who still have them; Town of Lamar and Darlington County trash disposal sites no longer have the capacity to recycle.
- USDA placed turkey vultures at both water tanks to keep away the buzzards that have been roosting on them. USDA stated that the vultures will last for approximately 3 months and then they will have to be replaced again.
- The leak on main street will be addressed as soon as possible.
- Rear tires on backhoe have been replaced.

Chief Carl Scott's Police Department Report:

- Welcomed Ty Christmas to the Lamar Police Department as a Reserved Officer.
- Reaching out to companies to perform drug testing. Establishing a drug testing protocol for all current and new Town of Lamar employees. The new employees will also have their background check.
- Mayor McPherson asked about the progress of the tip line. Chief Scott says the response has been minimal, but that it is a work in progress.
- Mayor McPherson asked about the Silver Foxes Program. Chief remarked that this program is for Lamar's senior Citizens and they will have more information forthcoming in the month of January.

Financial Report from Doug Poston of Douglas R Poston, Jr. CPA

- General Fund decreased by \$24,000 for the month of October.
- Utility fund decreased by \$11,000 for the month of October.
- Mayor McPherson asked Mr. Poston to perform a financial analysis comparing 2020 to 2019. She pointed out that the funds were showing a large balance on the financial analysis report because the \$91,2000 from the RIA Grant and the \$48, 298 from the Commerce Grant were included. Mr. Poston stated that the grant funds were not included in the analysis.
- Mayor McPherson said that the \$42,9000 transferred from the General Fund to the Utility Fund thus far in 2020 has already exceeded the \$40,948.38 transferred in the entirety of 2019. (\$30, 000+ was due to the repair at railroad Avenue.)
- The Town of Lamar paid \$99,042.70 to Darlington County Water and Sewer Authority in 2019.
- The analysis showed the first 3 quarters of 2020. There was a decrease in revenue during the 2nd quarter.
- Mr. Poston thinks that the town loss revenue in the 2nd quarter by reducing the number of days that Town Hall was opened. Councilwoman Mack commented that the closures of the local schools during that the same period was the more likely reason for the drop off in revenue.
- Mayor McPherson is hopeful that the state and local municipalities may receive money from the Cares Act. She pointed out that the town did receive reimbursement for monies spent on Covid-19.

Councilwoman Lee read an emergency face covering ordinance for the Town of Lamar. Upon the reading of the ordinance, Mayor McPherson asked for a motion to adapt the ordinance. Councilwoman Bradley made the motion and Councilwoman Mack seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously. The effective date is January 4, 2021 and the expiration date will be March 4, 2021. [S.C. Code 5-7-250(d) states that “to meet public emergencies affecting life, health, safety, or the property of the people, council may adopt emergency ordinances...by the affirmative vote of at two-thirds of the members council present. An emergency ordinance is effective immediately upon its enactment without regards to any reading, public hearing, publication requirements, or Public notice requirements. Emergency ordinances shall expire automatically as of the sixty-first day following the date of enactment.”]

Councilwoman Bradley read a written proposal concerning the revised Lamar Town Hall business hours. This proposal would be implemented after it is review and approved by Town Council in January 2021:

- Propose that office employees continue to keep a part time work schedule and that they alternate days worked. This would allow for safer office practices since they would rarely work in the same space, at the same time.
- Employee #1 would work Mondays and Tuesdays, and employee #2 would work Wednesdays and Thursdays with the office being closed at 12:00 pm on Fridays. Employees could alternate Fridays as needed.
- Building should be sanitized daily. In addition to hand sanitizing stations at each entrance, face masks will be required and provided to any person entering the building.
- Replace office door with a window style half door that includes and a screen to cut down on prolong face to face contact.
- Any person who remains in the building for more than 15 minutes must have a daily temperature check that is documented and reported to their supervisor.

Mayor McPherson stated that if Town Hall is open to the public, citizens must realize that this is a place of business and not a place for socializing. She also stressed that the town would take the necessary steps to ensure that Town of Lamar Employees and citizens are protected against the coronavirus.

Councilwoman Bradley stated that Christmas on Main was an awesome event and that there is another Christmas event scheduled to take place this coming weekend. She said that since there was some miscommunication about the second event, she would like to implement an application process for events that occur in town. This process would allow Law Enforcement, Public Works, and Mayor McPherson (and others) to know about the event and provide any assistance that might be required.

Councilwoman Bradley also stated that insurance would need to be purchased so that the Town would not be held liable if something happens during the event. Councilwoman Bradley will take the lead in gathering information to implement the permit process; Councilwoman Mack will assist her.

Jannie Lathan of Lathan Consulting gave an update on the following:

- The town is staying in compliance with DHEC; and we are hopeful that DHEC will close out the latest DHEC Consent Order.
- DHEC Site visit on January 7, 2021 or January 13, 2021
- The design of the Zion Road Pump Station Project is 70% complete.
- The Town is having an engineer and contractor look at the situation at the Railroad Avenue Pump Station.

Councilwoman Lee spoke on the success of the Christmas on Main Festival and invited other Lamar Citizens to join the Lamar Christmas Committee.

Timothy Dargan discussed upcoming events:

- Care South Mobile Unit Schedule (Monday, December 21 & Tuesday, December 29).
- Harvest Hope Mobile Food Pantry at Lamar Town Hall (December 21 @ 2:00 pm).
- Memorial for Lamar Citizens that transitioned in the Year 2020.
- Lamar Town Council Special Election (Tuesday, January 12, 2021).

Mayor McPherson discussed the passing of Former Lamar Chief of Police, Charles Woodle. She proposed that the flag at Town Hall be flown at half mast and that a donation being taken up and given to Chief Woodle's family.

Councilwoman Mack said that several citizens have been asking if there will an Egg Scramble Jamboree in 2021. There are discussions about having virtual events.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Bradley to adjourn the Lamar Town Council Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mack. Mayor McPherson adjourned the meeting at 7:09 pm.

Timothy L. Dargan, Administrative Support