

Lamar Town Council Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2021

Lamar Town Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Darnell Byrd-McPherson at 6:21 PM.

Invocation was given by Deacon Tim Dargan.

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

Others in attendance were Tim Dargan, Chief Carl Scott, and Mike Lloyd. Pamela Prince participated remotely via Zoom.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Lee that the agenda be accepted. Councilman Cook seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mack to accept the minutes from the March 8, 2021 Lamar Town Council Meeting as read. Councilwoman Bradley seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Jannie Lathan of Lathan Consulting Corporation was not present. Ms. Lathan's report was omitted.

Doug Poston of Doug R. Poston, Jr. CPA was not present. Mr. Poston provided the financial records as information.

Tim Dargan gave an update on the status of the Town of Lamar 2018-2019 financial audit being conducted by the Brittingham Group. Mr. Dargan said that the auditors were "turning over every stone" and he praised how meticulous, professional, and patient they have been. The auditors have gathered a lot of information thus far, but they are still going through the collection process. Mr. Dargan said the task has been tedious, but the Town will be the better for it at the conclusion of the audit.

Chief Carl Scott added that he spoke to the auditors about the implementation of E-Tickets. More information concerning E-Tickets will be forthcoming.

Pamela Prince of the Pee Dee Coalition joined the meeting via zoom to discuss April being Child Abuse and Sexual Assault Awareness Month. She said that the coalition has two virtual Clergy Roundtable events planned for the month and expressed that they need the church' help and guidance in dealing with sexual assault issues:

Tuesday, April 13th @ 1:00 pm hosted by Chesterfield and Darlington Counties

Thursday, April 15th @1:00 pm hosted by Dillion and Marlboro Counties

Ms. Prince also spoke about recognizing National Denim Day on the 28th of April; Darlington County will also observe Denim Day on the 16th of April. Ms. Prince said that Denim Day was created from a sexual assault case that occurred in 1992 where the assailant blamed the assault on the victim because she was wearing tight jeans.

Mike Lloyd reported that the Town of Lamar is still experiencing a significant water loss. He thinks that having the water tanks calibrated will help, along with finding and exchanging faulty water meters.

Mr. Lloyd stated that 114 out of 490 accounts have used less than 1000 gallons of water; he is researching these customers to see why the usage rate is so low.

Councilwoman Inez Lee gave a report on the "Great American Clean Up". She said that 51 volunteers donated over 6 hours for the event; 15 volunteers lived outside of the city limit. 76 bags of trash were picked up on that Saturday and 36 bags were picked up afterwards.

Councilwoman Lee thanked Darlington County Council for the truck that they donated to the Town of Lamar. She spoke about the increase in delinquent water bills and non-payment of water bills; actions will be taken by council and the Public Works Department to address this issue. Councilwoman Lee thanked the Public Works Department for going over and beyond the call of duty in recent weeks.

A Citizen of Lamar, Edith Josey, submitted the following question to Town Council, "If a customer's water bill increases because of a water leak, would the sewer bill increase by the same amount"?

Mayor McPherson and the Town Council replied that a customer sewer bill should not increase due to a water leak. Under normal circumstances, the sewer bill mirrors the water bill, but this should not apply with a water leak.

Another citizen submitted the following question to Council, "If a citizen in Lamar's city limit purchases water from the Town, is it mandatory for them to also pay for sanitation services"? Mayor and Council stated that customers who purchase water must also pay for sanitation service. Mike Lloyd mentioned that the one exception would be a merchant who has a commercial dumpster.

Mayor McPherson pleaded with citizens to submit their questions and concerns to Town Council members and Town hall staff members. She added that we work for the Citizens of Lamar. She also said that the Town would send out letters or contact water customers who are severely delinquent with their water bills so that they can contact the Darlington County Community Action Agency.

Councilwoman Mack made a motion that the citizens only be billed for the actual water loss and not for sewer in the event of a water leak. Councilwoman Bradley seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Chief Carl Scott gave an update on the Neighborhood Watch Program. He thanked the Darlington County Sherriff Office and Investigator Deandre Richardson for presenting two presentations, "Real Guns that Look Like Toys" and "Real Drugs that Look Like Candy". He also thanked the Sherriff Department for spearheading the Hams for Seniors event.

Chief Scott said that the interview process for additional officers is ongoing.

Tim Dargan gave an update on covid-19 testing and vaccinations, Harvest Hope Food Giveaway partnership with local churches, event to honor David Beasley, and Text My Gov.

Councilwoman Mack made a motion that the Lamar Town Council Meeting be adjourned. Councilman Bradley Seconded the motion. Mayor McPherson adjourned the meeting at 7:09 pm.

Council went into Executive Session.

Timothy L. Dargan, Administrative Manager

