

Lamar Town Council Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2021

Lamar Town Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Darnell Byrd-McPherson at 6:50 PM.

Mayor McPherson opened the meeting by acknowledging and thanking Dr. Kristi Austin, Principal of Lamar-Spaulding Elementary School, for allowing the school to host the Lamar Town Council Meeting for the month of June. This is the first council meeting opened to the public since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

Invocation was given by Minister Angela Kirkland Jacobs.

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

Others in attendance were Dr. Marlon Thomas, Kristi Austin, Tim Dargan, Chief Carl Scott, Mike Lloyd, and Elijah Enoch-Smith. Jannie Lathan, Joe Bittle, Marek Calhoun, and Rosa McLeod participated remotely via Zoom.

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

A motion was made by Councilwoman Bradley to accept the minutes from the May 10, 2021, Lamar Town Council Meeting as read. Councilman Cook seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The following written reports were received as information by Mayor McPherson:

- 1) RIA Grant Report submitted by Jannie Lathan of Lathan Consulting Corporation.
- 2) Financial Reports submitted by Doug Poston of Douglas R. Poston, Jr. CPA.
- 3) Public Works Report submitted by Mike Lloyd.
- 4) Police Department Report submitted by Chief Carl Scott of the Lamar Police Department.

Mike Lloyd gave an update on his written report. He commented that Joe Butler of Butler Electric has completed the installation of the alarms and lights at the Cambridge and Ballpark lift stations; Mr. Butler hopes to install the alarms and lights at the Zion pump station this week.

Councilman Cook expounded on two of the Lamar Neighborhood programs for kids - the garden club and the racing league. Jerry Shull added that there is no age limit for the racing league, but they will monitor this going forward.

Tim Dargan gave an update on the re-opening of Town Hall. Town Hall will be open to the public every Monday and Tuesday from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, and from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm; additional days may be added as needed. Tim Dargan, Chief Carl Scott, and Elijah Enoch-Smith are at Town Hall Monday – Friday every week.

Mr. Dargan also spoke about the upgrade and availability of the telephone system, Text My Gov, Zoom, the Town of Lamar's monthly newspaper, website, and Facebook page.

Mayor McPherson commented on the importance of open and effective communication.

Councilwoman Bradley conducted the second reading for an amendment to Lamar Town Ordinance 1.207 (General Penalty. Continuing Violations) and Lamar Town Ordinance 7.301 (Penalties). The amendment would increase the fine amount from \$200 to \$500. The increase will make the fine amount more in line with other municipalities as well as assist with e-ticketing.

The second reading was passed unanimously by Town Council.

The second portion of the council meeting was conducted in a Town Hall format which allowed various agencies and official to make presentations and receive questions from the audience.

Joe Bittle and Marek Calhoun of CareSouth Carolinas gave an overview of their organization efforts to combat the coronavirus epidemic. They also spoke about the covid-19 vaccinations, Moby-1 unit, sleeves up program, flu shots, and the need to remain vigilant and cautious.

Rosa McLeod of Darlington County Community Action Agency said that funds are currently available for home cooling assistance. Limited funds available for water, rent, and mortgage (only one month for house payment). She listed the requirement for obtaining assistance. DCCAA will hold a public election on June 26 to fill 4 seats on its Board of Commission.

Dr. Marlon Thomas, Principal of Lamar High School, gave a virtual presentation and an oral overview about the first magnet school program at Lamar High School. He also spoke about his excitement of being the new principal for the school.

Kristi Austin, Principal of Lamar-Spaulling Elementary, spoke about the new school and the challenge that staff and students faced this past school year due to covid-19 restrictions. She looks forward to a more normal setting and working with the community this upcoming school year.

Danielle Wilkes, Chairman Christmas Committee, said that the committee will have 16 new receptacles installed on light poles on Main Street so that they can utilize all the snowflakes during the holiday season. All poles must have streetlights to get receptacles, only 12 currently have lights; therefore, they must purchase 4 four streetlights to use all 16 receptacles. The Christmas Committee will pay a one-time payment of \$2,255.40 to purchase the receptacles. The committee will also pay \$37.52 for the streetlights from November-January every year, the Town will pay the \$37.52 for the remaining nine months.

Ms. Wilkes said that the Town of Lamar Christmas Festival will be the 1st Saturday in December.

Mayor McPherson would like for all business in Town with awnings that are not new, to clean them up or replace them. She also thinks that the businesses need to create an association so that they can work together to create revenue and spruce up the town.

Lamar Citizen, Jerry Shull, enquired about the dilapidated buildings on main Street. Chief Scott replied that once the owner is located and notified, they will have 60 days to come up with a plan of action.

Councilwoman Bradley made a motion that the Lamar Town Council Meeting be adjourned. Councilman Cook seconded the motion. Mayor McPherson adjourned the meeting at 7:57 pm.

Timothy L. Dargan, Administrative Manager

