

Lamar Town Council Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2021

Lamar Town Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Darnell Byrd-McPherson at 6:15 PM.

Invocation was given by Deacon Tim Dargan.

Mayor McPherson introduced and welcomed Tyler Cook as a new member of the Lamar Town Council. Tim Dargan introduced former Councilman Mike Lloyd, Paul Corker, and Davey Wadlington as members of the Public Works Department. Chief Scott introduced Officer Daniel Barnett as a part time member of the Lamar Police Department.

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 participated remotely via Zoom call. Councilwoman Mary Ann Mack was not in attendance.

Others in attendance were Tim Dargan, Chief Carl Scott, and Mike Lloyd. Jannie Lathan and Doug Poston participated remotely via Zoom.

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

A motion was made by Councilwoman Bradley to accept the minutes from the January 11, 2021, Lamar Town Council Meeting as read. Councilman Cook seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Report from Jannie Lathan of Lathan Consulting Corporation:

- Received notification today that SERCAP is about 90 % complete with the GIS mapping for the Town's sanitary sewer system.
- Still waiting on Davis & Brown to submit the final request for payment so that the Town can make the payment to RWF Construction.
- Glenn Kirven sent an email stating that Davis & Brown are getting ready to install the floor meter (Zion pump station). Hopefully, the flow meter will be installed, and the Town can close out the related contract.
- Working with SERCAP to put in the grant application for the State Revolving Fund to secure funding to replace the Railroad pump station.
- Received bid to perform repair work at the Railroad pump station; bid came in as a lump sum, the Town is requesting a more detailed cost estimate before moving forward.

Mayor McPherson asked Ms. Lathan the following questions:

What does the acronym SERCAP stand for? Ms. Lathan stated that the acronym stood for Southeast Rural Community Assistant Project.

Did RWF submit the repair estimate? Ms. Lathan replied that Evans Paving submitted the estimate.

Has the flow meter been installed? Ms. Lathan suggested that someone from town should verify whether the meter has been installed.

Public Works Department Report:

Councilwoman Lee stated that the February water bills were being mail out late due to several ill staff members; because of this, the due date for paying the water bill will be extended from the 10th to the 20th. She also said that that due date will be to the 20th going forward.

Mike Lloyd Water Report:

January 2021 - Daily water purchased 145, 887 gallons [Monthly water purchased 4,522,497 gallons]

2020 Year in Review:

Gallons of water Purchased.....37,601,220. (39,090,090)

Gallons of Water Sold.....26,061,629. (26,061,629)

Gallons used During Hydrant Flushing.....238,660. (238,660)

Unaccounted for Gallons.....11,300,931. (12,789,801)

Average Percentage Loss.....35 to 40% (35 to 42%)

Average Daily Loss (Gallons).....30 to 40,000 (30 to 40,000)

What the numbers would have been if there had been no problems with the 3” water meter and no major water loss during the months of January – May 2020 and the month of August 2020.

Mayor McPherson asked Mr. Lloyd what some of the reasons for the water and/or revenue loss were and what were his recommendations for addressing them. She wanted to know what he would do first.

Mr. Lloyd replied that his first action would be to look at the Water Department billing register for customers and compare the previous reading with the current reading. If both readings are the same, it would probably indicate that the water meter has stopped. In cases such as this, the Town would charge the customer a minimum bill. At some point, the Town should physically check the location that show the same reading and (1) change the faulty water meters, and (2) see if someone is residing in that location.

Mr. Lloyd said that he has discovered service line leaks in various locations in the Town; when he locates them, he contacts someone (Kirk Rouse) to repair the line and stop the leak. He thinks that all old water meters should be replaced. The new meters will raise the cost to the customers.

Mayor McPherson said that she would like to see written operating procedures so that when new staff members come in, they will have some guidelines to follow and there should be meetings with current staff and new employees to bring them up to speed on the process.

The mayor asked if there were any new meters in stock. Mr. Lloyd said that he was sure there were a few, but Councilwoman Lee would have more information. He also talked about updating the current water meter system to a system that could read the meters from 50 – 75 feet away, be download into a porting system at Town Hall within several hours; This would save manpower hours and resources by freeing up the person reading the water meters and the water clerk.

The mayor remarked that we should look at cross training when it comes to reading the water meters and that we should get an estimate on the new system.

Councilman Cook asked if the water meters that are in stock are already equipped with the read system technology. Mr. Lloyd said that they are not.

Councilwoman Bradley commented that there was an effort several years ago to investigate the cost and feasibility of purchasing the read water meters and that Ms. Jannie Lathan was going to try to get a grant to secure them. Mr. Lloyd replied that he recalled those efforts and think that the cost was around \$150 per/meter at the time.

Chief Carl Scott Police Department Report:

- Will receive safety equipment that was donated from the National Sherriff's Association.
- Received two cars that were donated from the Town of Bethune. (Thanks to Chief Ward, Mayor, and Town Council)
- Received the Palmetto Pride Trash Grant (Thanks to Ms. Jannie Lathan and Councilwoman Inez Lee)
- Asking for more volunteers for the Neighborhood Watch Program

Doug Poston – Financial Report

Mr. Poston was unable to participate due to the low volume on his device. Mayor McPherson read the reports in his absence.

- Mayor McPherson noted that there were several late outstanding invoices that need to be addressed.
- Mayor McPherson wants Mr. Poston to match the actual invoices with actual payments.
- The Grant funds listed on the bank balances are not operating money, they are for specific water projects. The mayor wants these items separated going forward.
- The mayor noted that funds had to be transferred from the Administrative Account to the Utility Account.
- The budgeted amount are not actual dollars; they are projected. They Mayor wants the Town to go back and look at hard dollars to make a true budget.
- Loss revenue with Mozingo Liquors closing and the Public Schools being closed for a time. Need to come up with other sources of revenue (Bike Shop, Pet Grooming Service, etc.)
- List all business on the Town's website and check to see if business license fees are current.
- Mayor McPherson spoke about the new restaurant "Little Taste of Cajun".

Mayor Darnell Byrd McPherson – Signatory for Bank Accounts

- The former Mayor Pro Tem, Lang Howell, was the secondary signature on the Town of Lamar Bank Accounts.
- Councilwoman Lee made a motion that current Mayor Pro Tem, Councilwoman Angele Bradley, be the secondary signature on the Town of Lamar bank accounts. Councilman Cook Seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Carolina Bank Account Numbers:

Town of Lamar Administrative Account – 0103000153

Town of Lamar Water Account - 0103000161

Town of Lamar Withholding Account - 0100144467

Name of new signer: Angele White Bradley

Remaining signer: Darnell Byrd McPherson

Name of signer to remove: C. Lang Howell

Endorse checks and orders for the payment or otherwise withdrawal or transfer funds on deposit with the Financial Institution.

Name of Control Person: Timothy L. Dargan, Administrative Manager

- Jannie Lathan Pointed out that the RIA Grant Account needs two primary signatures. Councilman Cook volunteered to be the second signatory.

Deacon Dargan gave an update on the Town's partnership with Save the Children and Lee County First Step Food Giveaway Program and commented on the positive feedback the Town received from the citizens concerning the 2020 Memorial for deceased members from the Town of Lamar. He also spoke about the upcoming Covid-19 testing and vaccination schedules.

Mayor McPherson reminded everyone that the Town has loss several community members to coronavirus and that the Town is praying for their loved ones.

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

Timothy L. Dargan, Administrative Support